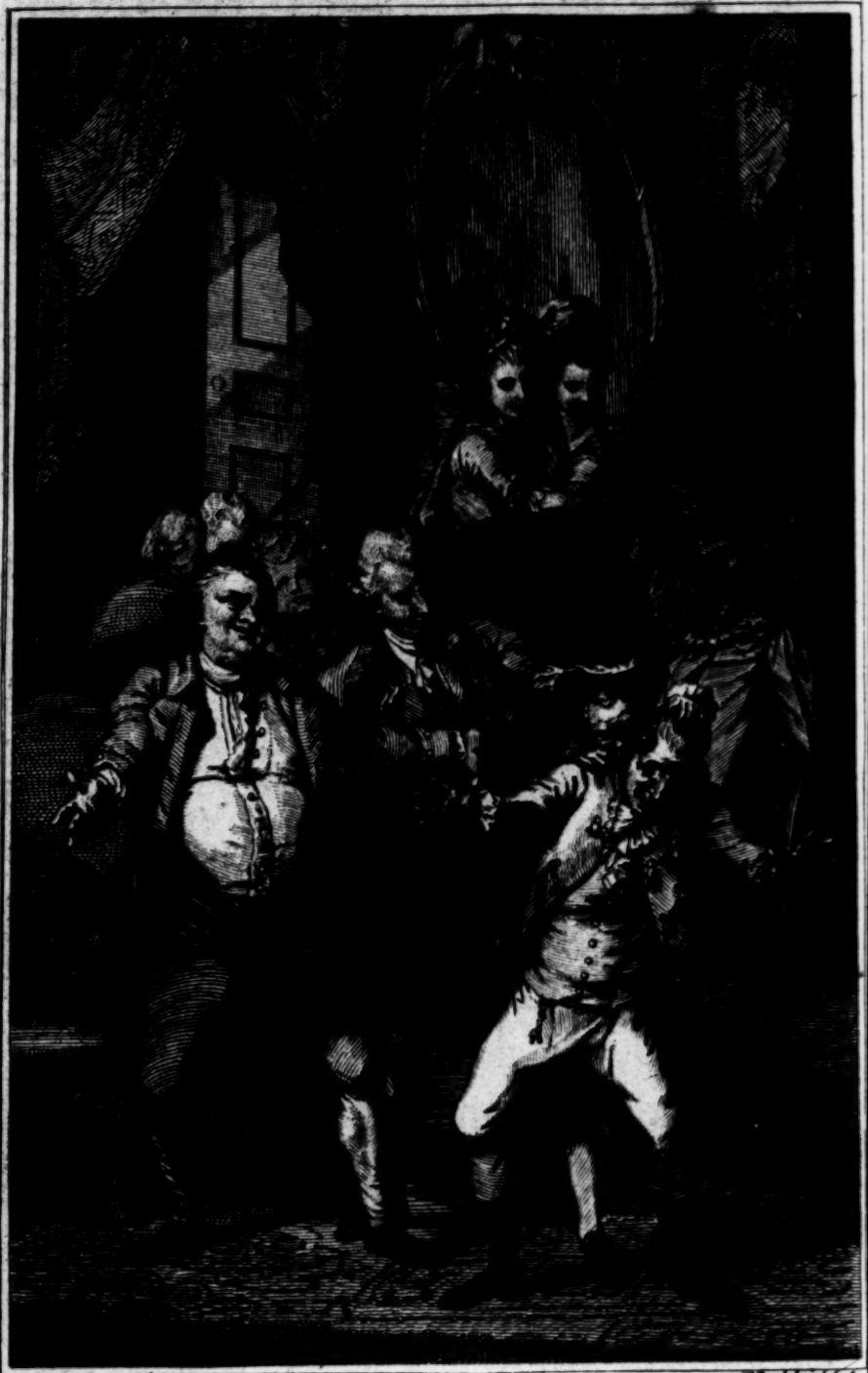
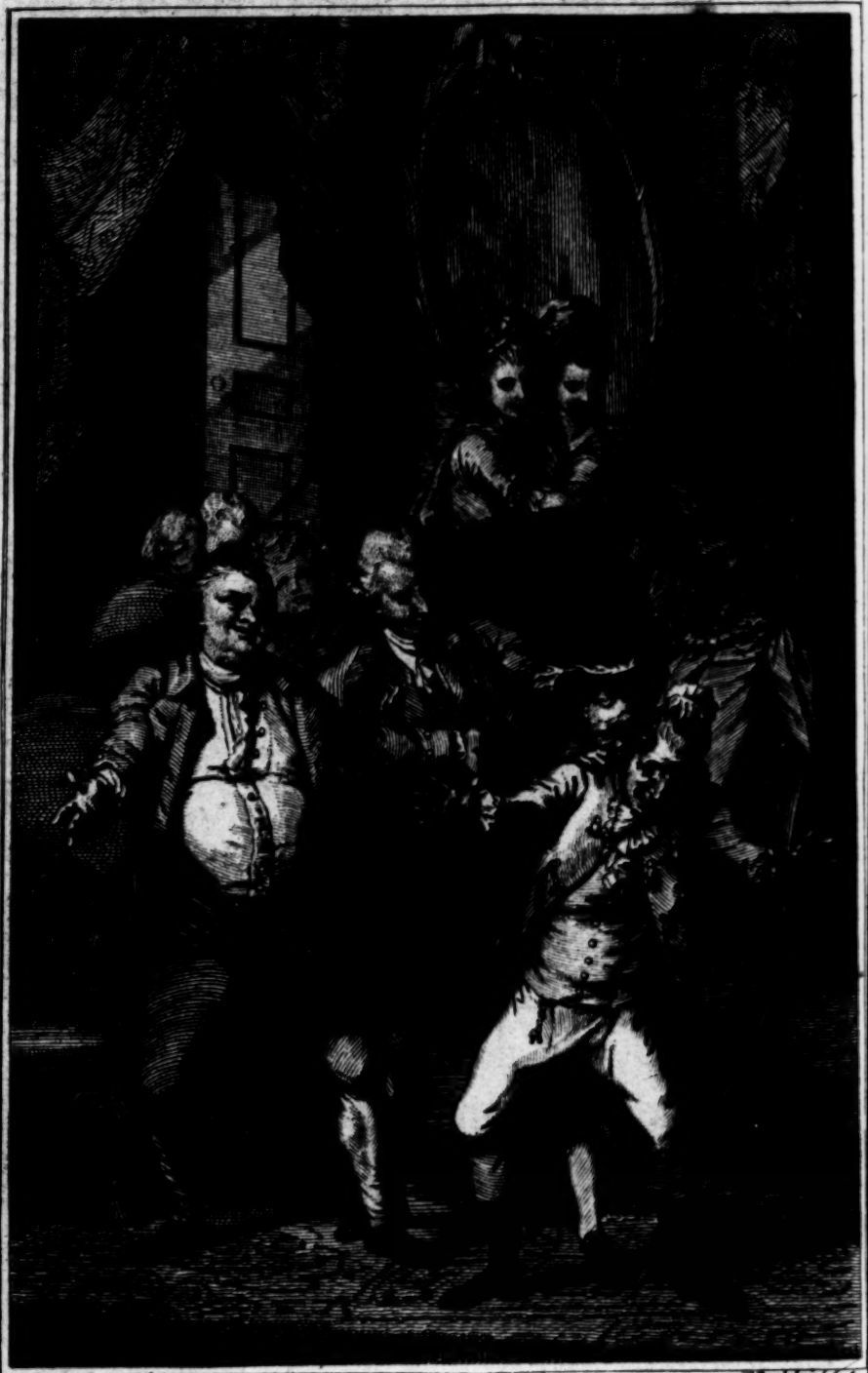


J. Mortimer Inv. F. Bartolozzi Sculp.

T. Lowndes Published Nov.r 24 1779.



J. Mortimer Inv. F. Bartolozzi Sculp.

T. Lowndes Published Nov.r 24 1779.

243 c 10

EVELINA,

OR,

THE HISTORY

OF

A YOUNG LADY'S

ENTRANCE

INTO THE

WORLD.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

Printed for T. and W. LOWNDES,
N° 77, in FLEET-STREET.

M.DCC.LXXXIII.

EVELINA,

OR,

THE HISTORY OF EVELINA

A YOUNG LADY'S

ENTRANCE

INTO THE

WORLD.

IN NEW SUITS.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

Printed for T. and W. LOWNDES,

No. 77, in Fleet Street.

MDCCLXXXIII.

EVELINA.

LETTER I.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Bristol Hotwells, Sept. 10.

THE first fortnight that I passed here, was so quiet, so serene, that it gave me reason to expect a settled calm during my stay; but if I may now judge of the time to come, by the present state of my mind, the calm will be succeeded by a storm, of which I dread the violence!

This morning, in my way to the pump-room, with Mrs. Selwyn, we were both very much incommoded by three gentlemen, who were sauntering by the side of the

Avon, laughing, and talking very loud, and lounging so diſagreeably, that we knew not how to paſs them. They all three fixed their eyes very boldly upon me, alternately looking under my hat, and whiſpering one another. Mrs. Selwyn aſſumed an air of uncommon ſternneſs, and ſaid, "You will pleaſe, Gentlemen, either to proceed yourſelves, or to ſuffer us."

"Oh! Ma'am," cried one of them, "we will ſuffer *you*, with the greateſt pleaſure in life."

"You will ſuffer us *both*," anſwered ſhe, "or I am much miſtaken; you had better, therefore, make way quietly, for I ſhould be ſorry to give my ſervant the trouble of teaching you better manners."

Her commanding air ſtruck them, yet they all choſe to laugh, and one of them wiſhed the fellow would begin his leſſon, that he might have the pleaſure of rolling him into the Avon; while another advancing to me with a freedom which made me ſtart, ſaid, "By my ſoul I did not know you!—but I am ſure I cannot be miſtaken; had not I the honour of ſeeing you, once, at the Pantheon?"

I then recollected the nobleman who, at that place, had ſo much embarraſſed me. I courtſied without ſpeaking. They all bowed, and making, though in a very eaſy manner,

manner, an apology to Mrs. Selwyn, they ſuffered us to paſs on, but choſe to accompany us.

"And where," continued this Lord, "can you ſo long have hid yourſelf? do you know I have been in ſearch of you this age? I could neither find you out, nor hear of you: not a creature could inform me what was become of you. I cannot imagine where you could be immured. I was at two or three public places every night, in hopes of meeting you. Pray did you leave town?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"So early in the ſeaſon!—what could poſſibly induce you to go before the birth-day?"

"I had nothing, my Lord, to do with the birth-day."

"By my ſoul, all the women who *had*, may rejoice you were away. Have you been here any time?"

"Not above a fortnight, my Lord."

"A fortnight!—how unlucky that I did not meet you ſooner! but I have had a run of ill luck ever ſince I came. How long ſhall you ſtay?"

"Indeed, my Lord, I don't know."

"Six weeks, I hope; for I ſhall wiſh the place at the devil when you go."

"Do you, then, flatter yourſelf, my

Lord," said Mrs. Selwyn, who had hitherto listened in silent contempt, "that you shall see such a beautiful spot as this, when you visit the dominions of the devil?"

"Ha, ha, ha! faith, my Lord," said one of his companions, who still walked with us, though the other had taken leave; "the Lady is rather hard upon you."

"Not at all," answered Mrs. Selwyn; "for as I cannot doubt but his Lordship's rank and interest will secure him a place there, it would be reflecting on his understanding, to suppose he should not wish to enlarge and beautify his dwelling."

Much as I was disgusted with this Lord, I must own Mrs. Selwyn's severity rather surprised me: but you, who have so often observed it, will not wonder she took so fair an opportunity of indulging her humour.

"As to *places*," returned he, totally unmoved, "I am so indifferent in them, that the devil take me if I care which way I go! *Hell*, indeed, I am not so easy about; and therefore I expect that those angels with whose beauty I am so much enraptured in this world, will have the goodness to afford me some little consolation in the other."

"What, my Lord!" cried Mrs. Selwyn, "would you wish to degrade the habitation

bitation of your friend, by admitting into it the insipid company of the upper regions?"

"What do you do with yourself this evening?" said his Lordship, turning to me.

"I shall be at home, my Lord."

"O, à-propos—where are you?"

"Young ladies, my Lord," said Mrs. Selwyn, "are *no where*."

"Prithee," whispered his Lordship, "is that queer woman your mother?"

Good Heavens, Sir, what words for such a question!

"No, my Lord."

"Your maiden aunt, then?"

"No."

"Whoever she is, I wish she would mind her own affairs: I don't know what the devil a woman lives for after thirty: she is only in other folks way. Shall you be at the assembly?"

"I believe not, my Lord."

"No!—why then how in the world can you contrive to pass your time?"

"In a manner which your Lordship will think very extraordinary," cried Mrs. Selwyn; "for the young Lady *reads*."

"Ha, ha, ha! Egad, my Lord," cried the facetious companion, "you are got into bad hands."

off. You had better, Madam," answered he, "attack Jack Coverley, here, for you will make nothing of me."

"Of you, my Lord!" cried she; "Heaven forbid I should ever entertain so idle an expectation! I only talk, like a silly woman, for the sake of talking; but I have by no means so low an opinion of your Lordship, as to suppose you vulnerable to censure."

"Do, pray, Ma'am," cried he, "turn to Jack Coverley; he's the very man for you; —he'd be a wit himself if he was not too modest."

"Prithee, my Lord, be quiet," returned the other; "if the lady is contented to bestow all her favours upon *you*, why should you make such a point of my going snacks?"

"Don't be apprehensive, Gentlemen," said Mrs. Selwyn, drily, "I am not romantic,—I have not the least design of doing good to either of you."

"Have not you been ill since I saw you?" said his Lordship, again addressing himself to me.

"Yes, my Lord."

"I thought so, you are paler than you was, and I suppose that's the reason I did not recollect you sooner."

"Has not your Lordship too much gal-

gallantry," cried Mrs. Selwyn, "to discover a young lady's illness by her looks?"

"The devil a word can I speak for that woman," said he, in a low voice; "do, prithee, Jack, take her in hand."

"Excuse me, my Lord!" answered Mr. Coverley.

"When shall I see you again?" continued his Lordship; "do you go to the pump-room every morning?"

"No, my Lord."

"Do you ride out?"

"No, my Lord."

Just then we arrived at the pump-room, and an end was put to our conversation, if it is not an abuse of words to give such a term to a string of rude questions and free compliments.

He had not opportunity to say much more to me, as Mrs. Selwyn joined a large party, and I walked home between two ladies. He had, however, the curiosity to see us to the door.

Mrs. Selwyn was very eager to know how I had made acquaintance with this nobleman, whose manners so evidently announced the character of a confirmed libertine: I could give her very little satisfaction, as I was ignorant even of his name. But, in the afternoon, Mr. Ridge-

way the apothecary, gave us very ample information.

As his person was easily described, for he is remarkably tall, Mr. Ridgeway told us he was Lord Merton, a nobleman who is but lately come to his title, though he has already dissipated more than half his fortune: a professed admirer of beauty, but a man of most licentious character: that among men, his companions consisted chiefly of gamblers and jockies, and among women, he was rarely admitted.

"Well, Miss Anville," said Mrs. Selwyn, "I am glad I was not more civil to him. You may depend upon it for keeping him at a distance."

"O, Madam," said Mr. Ridgeway, "he may now be admitted any where, for he is going to *reform*."

"Has he, under that notion, persuaded any fool to marry him?"

"Not yet, Madam, but a marriage is expected to take place shortly: it has been some time in agitation, but the friends of the Lady have obliged her to wait till she is of age: however, her brother, who has chiefly opposed the match, now that she is near being at her own disposal, is tolerably quiet. She is very pretty, and will have a large fortune. We expect her at the Wells every day."

"What

"What is her name?" said Mrs. Selwyn.

"Larpent," answered he, "Lady Louisa Larpent, sister of Lord Orville."

"Lord Orville!" repeated I, all amazement.

"Yes, Ma'am; his Lordship is coming with her. I have had certain information. They are to be at the honourable Mrs. Beaumont's. She is a relation of my Lord's, and has a very fine house upon Clifton Hill."

His Lordship is coming with her!—Good God, what an emotion did those words give me! How strange, my dear Sir, that, just at this time, he should visit Bristol! It will be impossible for me to avoid seeing him, as Mrs. Selwyn is very well acquainted with Mrs. Beaumont. Indeed, I have had an escape in not being under the same roof with him, for Mrs. Beaumont invited us to her house immediately upon our arrival; but the inconveniency of being so distant from the pump-room made Mrs. Selwyn decline her civility.

Oh that the first meeting was over!—or that I could quit Bristol without seeing him!—inexpressibly do I dread an interview: should the same impertinent freedom be expressed by his looks, which dictated his cruel letter, I shall not know how to

endure either him or myself. Had I but returned it, I should be easier, because my sentiments of it would then be known to him; but now, he can only gather them from my behaviour, and I tremble lest he should mistake my indignation for confusion!—lest he should misconstrue my reserve into embarrassment!—for how, my dearest Sir, how shall I be able totally to divest myself of the respect with which I have been used to think of him?—the pleasure with which I have been used to see him?

Surely he, as well as I, must recollect the letter at the moment of our meeting, and he will, probably, mean to gather my thoughts of it from my looks;—oh that they could but convey to him my real detestation of impertinence and vanity! then would he see how much he had mistaken my disposition when he imagined them my due.

There was a time when the very idea that such a man as Lord Merton should ever be connected with Lord Orville, would have both surprised and shocked me, and even yet I am pleased to hear of his repugnance to the marriage.

But how strange, that a man of so abandoned a character should be the choice of a sister of Lord Orville! and how strange

that, almoſt at the moment of the union, he ſhould be ſo importunate in gallantry to another woman! What a world is this we live in! how corrupt! how degenerate! well might I be contented to ſee no more of it! If I find that the *eyes* of Lord Orville agree with his *pen*,—I ſhall then think, that of all mankind, the only virtuous individual reſides at Berry Hill.

LETTER II.

Evelina in continuation.

Briſtol Hotwells, Sept. 16.

O H, Sir, Lord Orville is ſtill himſelf! ſtill, what from the moment I beheld, I believed him to be—all that is amiable in man! and your happy Evelina, reſtored at once to ſpirits and tranquillity, is no longer ſunk in her own opinion, nor diſcontented with the world;—no longer, with dejected eyes, ſees the proſpect of paſſing her future days in ſadneſs, doubt, and ſuſpicion!—with revived courage ſhe now looks forward, and expects to meet with goodneſs, even among mankind:—though ſtill ſhe feels, as ſtrongly as ever, the folly of hoping,

hoping, in any *second* instance, to meet with *perfection*.

Your conjecture was certainly right, Lord Orville, when he wrote that letter, could not be in his senses. Oh that intemperance should have power to degrade so low, a man so noble!

This morning I accompanied Mrs. Selwyn to Clifton Hill, where, beautifully situated, is the house of Mrs. Beaumont. Most uncomfortable were my feelings during our walk, which was very slow, for the agitation of my mind made me more than usually sensible how weak I still continue. As we entered the house, I summoned all my resolution to my aid, determined rather to die than give Lord Orville reason to attribute my weakness to a wrong cause. I was happily relieved from my perturbation, when I saw Mrs. Beaumont was alone. We sat with her for, I believe, an hour without interruption, and then we saw a phaeton drive up to the gate, and a lady and gentleman alight from it.

They entered the parlour with the rest of people who were at home. The gentleman, I soon saw, was Lord Merton; he came shuffling into the room with his boots on, and his whip in his hand; and, having made something like a bow to Mrs. Beaumont, he turned towards me. His surprise

was

was very evident, but he took no manner of notice of me. He waited, I believe, to discover, first, what chance had brought me to that house, where he did not look much rejoiced at meeting me. He seated himself very quietly at the window, without speaking to any body.

Mean time, the lady, who seemed very young, hobbling rather than walking into the room, made a passing courtsie to Mrs. Beaumont, saying, "How are you, Ma'am?" and then, without noticing any body else, with an air of languor she flung herself upon a sofa, protesting, in a most affected voice, and speaking so softly she could hardly be heard, that she was fatigued to death. "Really, Ma'am, the roads are so monstrous dusty,—you can't imagine how troublesome the dust is to one's eyes!—and the sun, too, is monstrous disagreeable!—I dare say I shall be so tanned I sha'n't be fit to be seen this age. Indeed, my Lord, I won't go out with you any more, for you don't care where you take one."

"Upon my honour," said Lord Merton, "I took you the pleasantest ride in England; the fault was in the sun, not me."

"Your Lordship is in the right," said Mrs. Selwyn, "to transfer the fault to the

ſun, becauſe it has ſo many excellencies to counterbalance partial inconveniences, that a *little* blame will not injure *that* in our eſtimation."

Lord Merton looked by no means delighted at this attack; which I believe he would not ſo readily have made, but to revenge his neglect of us.

"Did you meet your brother, Lady Louiſa?" ſaid Mrs. Beaumont.

"No, Ma'am. Is he rode out this morning?"

I then found, what I had before ſuſpected, that this Lady was Lord Orville's ſiſter; how ſtrange, that ſuch near relations ſhould be ſo different to each other! There is, indeed, ſome reſemblance in their features, but in their manners, not the leaſt.

"Yes," anſwered Mrs. Beaumont, "and I believe he wiſhed to ſee you."

"My Lord drove ſo monſtrous faſt," ſaid Lady Louiſa, "that perhaps we paſſed him. He frighted me out of my ſenſes, I declare my head is quite giddy. Do you know, Ma'am, we have done nothing but quarrel all the morning?—You can't think how I've ſcolded;—have not I, my Lord?" and ſhe ſmiled expreſſively at Lord Merton.

"You have been, as you always are," ſaid

ſaid he, twiſting his whip with his fingers, "all ſweetneſs."

"O fie, my Lord," cried ſhe, "I know you don't think ſo; I know you think me very ill-natured;—don't you, my Lord?"

"No, upon my honour;—how can your Ladyſhip aſk ſuch a queſtion? Pray how goes time? my watch ſtands."

"It is almoſt three," anſwered Mrs. Beaumont.

"Lord, Ma'am, you frighten me!" cried Lady Louiſa; and then turning to Lord Merton, "why now, you wicked creature, you, did not you tell me it was but one?"

Mrs. Selwyn then roſe to take leave; but Mrs. Beaumont aſked if ſhe would look at the ſhrubbery. "I ſhould like it much," anſwered ſhe, "but that I fear to fatigue Miſs Anville."

Lady Louiſa then, raiſing her head from her hand, on which it had leant, turned round to look at me, and, having fully ſatisfied her curioſity, without any regard to the confuſion it gave me, turned about, and, again leaning on her hand, took no further notice of me.

I declared myſelf very able to walk, and begged that I might accompany them.

"What

"What say *you*, Lady Louisa," cried Mrs. Beaumont, "to a strole in the garden?"

"Me, Ma'am!—I declare I can't stir a step; the heat is so excessive, it would kill me. I'm half dead with it already; besides, I shall have no time to dress. Will any body be here to-day, Ma'am?"

"I believe not, unless Lord Merton will favour us with his company."

"With great pleasure, Madam."

"Well, I declare you don't deserve to be asked," cried Lady Louisa, "you wicked creature, you!—I *must* tell you one thing, Ma'am,—you can't think how abominable he was! do you know we met Mr. Lovel in his new phaeton, and my Lord was so cruel as to drive against it? we really flew. I declare I could not breathe. Upon my word, my Lord, I'll never trust myself with you again,—I won't indeed!"

We then went into the garden, leaving them to discuss the point at their leisure.

Do you remember a *pretty but affected young lady* I mentioned to have seen, in Lord Orville's party, at the Pantheon? How little did I then imagine her to be his sister! yet Lady Louisa Larpent is the very person. I can now account for the piqued manner of her speaking to Lord Merton

Merton that evening, and I can now account for the air of displeasure with which Lord Orville marked the undue attention of his future brother-in-law to me.

We had not walked long, ere, at a distance, I perceived Lord Orville, who seemed just dismounted from his horse, enter the garden. All my perturbation returned at the sight of him!—yet I endeavoured to repress every feeling but resentment. As he approached us, he bowed to the whole party, but I turned away my head, to avoid taking any share in his civility. Addressing himself immediately to Mrs. Beaumont, he was beginning to enquire after his sister, but upon seeing my face, he suddenly exclaimed "Miss Anville!—" and then he advanced, and made his compliments to me,—not with an air of vanity or impertinence, nor yet with a look of consciousness or shame,—but with a countenance open, manly, and charming!—with a smile that indicated pleasure, and eyes that sparkled with delight!—on my side was all the consciousness, for by him, I really believe, the letter was, at that moment, entirely forgotten.

With what politeness did he address me! with what sweetness did he look at me! the very tone of his voice seemed flattering! he congratulated himself upon his

good

good fortune in meeting with me,—hoped I ſhould ſpend ſome time at Briſtol, and enquired, even with anxiety enquired, if my health was the cauſe of my journey, in which caſe his ſatisfaction would be converted into apprehenſion.

Yet, ſtruck as I was with his manner, and charmed to find him ſuch as he was wont to be, imagine not, my dear Sir, that I forgot the reſentment I owe him, or the cauſe he has given me of diſpleaſure; no, my behaviour was ſuch as, I hope, had you ſeen, you would not have diſapproved: I was grave and diſtant, I ſcarce looked at him when he ſpoke, or anſwered him when he was ſilent.

As he muſt certainly obſerve this alteration in my conduct, I think it could not fail making him both recollect and repent the provocation he had ſo cauſeleſsly given me: for ſurely he was not ſo wholly loſt to reaſon, as to be now ignorant he had ever offended me.

The moment that, without abſolute rudeneſs, I was able, I turned entirely from him, and aſked Mrs. Selwyn if we ſhould not be late home? How Lord Orville looked I know not, for I avoided meeting his eyes, but he did not ſpeak another word as we proceeded to the garden-gate. Indeed I believe my abruptneſs ſurpriſed him,

him, for he did not ſeem to expect I had ſo much ſpirit. And, to own the truth, convinced as I was of the propriety, nay, neceſſity of ſhewing my diſpleaſure, I yet almoſt hated myſelf for receiving his politeneſs ſo ungraciouſly.

When we were taking leave, my eyes accidentally meeting his, I could not but obſerve that his gravity equalled my own, for it had entirely taken place of the ſmiles and good-humour with which he had met me.

"I am afraid this young Lady," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont, "is too weak for another long walk till ſhe is again reſted."

"If the Ladies will truſt to my driving," ſaid Lord Orville, "and are not afraid of a phaeton, mine ſhall be ready in a moment."

"You are very good, my Lord," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "but my will is yet unſigned, and I don't chuſe to venture in a phaeton with a young man while that is the caſe."

"O," cried Mrs. Beaumont, "you need not be afraid of my Lord Orville, for he is remarkably careful."

"Well, Miſs Anville," anſwered ſhe, "what ſay you?"

"Indeed," cried I, "I had much rather walk,—" But then, looking at Lord Orville, I perceived in his face a ſurpriſe

ſo

ſo ſerious at my abrupt refuſal, that I could not forbear adding, for I ſhould be ſorry to occaſion ſo much trouble.”

Lord Orville brightening at theſe words, came forward, and preſſed his offer in a manner not to be denied;—ſo the phaeton was ordered! “And indeed, my dear Sir,—I know not how it was,—but, from that moment, my coldneſs and reſerve inſenſibly wore away! You muſt not be angry,—it was my intention, nay, my endeavour, to ſupport them with firmneſs; but when I formed the plan, I thought only of the letter,—not of Lord Orville!—and how is it poſſible for reſentment to ſubſiſt without provocation? yet, believe me, my deareſt Sir, had he ſuſtained the part he began to act when he wrote the ever-to-be-regretted letter, your Evelina would not have forfeited her title to your eſteem, by contentedly ſubmitting to be treated with indignity.”

We continued in the garden till the phaeton was ready. When we parted from Mrs. Beaumont, ſhe repeated her invitation to Mrs. Selwyn to accept an apartment in her houſe, but the reaſon I have already mentioned made it be again declined.

Lord Orville drove very ſlow, and ſo cautiouſly, that, notwithſtanding the height of the phaeton, fear would have been ridi-

culous.

culous. I ſupported no part in the converſation, but Mrs. Selwyn extremely well ſupplied the place of two. Lord Orville himſelf did not ſpeak much, but the excellent ſenſe and refined good-breeding which accompany every word he utters, give value and weight to whatever he ſays.

"I ſuppoſe, my Lord," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, when we ſtopped at our lodgings, "you would have been extremely confuſed had we met any gentlemen who have the honour of knowing you."

"If I had," anſwered he, gallantly, "it would have been from mere compaſſion at their envy."

"No, my Lord," anſwered ſhe, "it would have been from mere ſhame, that, in an age ſo daring, you alone ſhould be ſuch a coward as to forbear to frighten women."

"O," cried he, laughing, "when a man is in a fright for himſelf, the ladies cannot but be in ſecurity; for you have not had half the apprehenſion for the ſafety of your perſons, that I have for that of my heart." He then alighted, handed us out, took leave, and again mounting the phaeton, was out of ſight in a minute.

"Certainly," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, when he was gone, "there muſt have been ſome miſtake in the birth of that young man;"

he

he was, undoubtedly, designed for the last age; for he is really polite!

And now, my dear Sir, do not you think, according to the present situation of affairs, I may give up my resentment, without imprudence or impropriety? I hope you will not blame me. Indeed, had you, like me, seen his respectful behaviour, you would have been convinced of the impracticability of supporting any further indignation.

LETTER III.

Evelina in continuation.

Bristol Hotwells, Sept. 19th.

YESTERDAY morning Mrs. Selwyn received a card from Mrs. Beaumont, to ask her to dine with her to-day; and another to the same purpose, came to me. The invitation was accepted, and we are but just arrived from Clifton-Hill.

We found Mrs. Beaumont alone in the parlour. I will write you the character of that lady, in the words of our satyrical friend Mrs. Selwyn. "She "is an absolute *Court Calendar bigot*;

"for, chancing herſelf to be born of a noble
"and ancient family, ſhe thinks proper to
"be of opinion, that *birth* and *virtue* are
"one and the ſame thing. She has ſome
"good qualities, but they rather originate
"from pride than principle, as ſhe piques
"herſelf upon being too high born to be
"capable of an unworthy action, and thinks
"it incumbent upon her to ſupport the dig-
"nity of her anceſtry. Fortunately for the
"world in general, ſhe has taken it into her
"head, that condeſcenſion is the moſt di-
"ſtinguiſhing virtue of high life; ſo that the
"ſame pride of family which renders others
"imperious, is with her the motive of affa-
"bility. But her civility is too formal to
"be comfortable, and too mechanical to be
"flattering. That ſhe does *me* the honour
"of ſo much notice, is merely owing to an
"accident which, I am ſure, is very painful
"to her remembrance; for it ſo happened
"that I once did her ſome ſervice, in regard
"to an apartment, at Southampton; and I
"have ſince been informed, that, at the time
"ſhe accepted my aſſiſtance, ſhe thought I
"was a woman of quality: and I make no
"doubt but ſhe was miſerable when ſhe
"diſcovered me to be a mere country gen-
"tlewoman: however, her nice notions of
"decorum have made her load me with
"favours ever ſince. But I am not much

"flattered by her civilities, as I am con-
"vinced I owe them neither to attachment
"nor gratitude, but ſolely to a deſire of can-
"celling an obligation which ſhe cannot
"brook being under, to one whoſe name
"is no where to be found in the Court
"Calendar."

You well know, my dear Sir, the delight this lady takes in giving way to her ſatirical humour.

Mrs. Beaumont received us very graciouſly, though ſhe ſomewhat diſtreſſed me by the queſtions ſhe aſked concerning my family, —ſuch as, Whether I was related to the Anvilles in the North?—Whether ſome of my name did not live in Lincolnſhire? and many other enquiries, which much embarraſſed me.

The converſation, next, turned upon the intended marriage in her family. She treated the ſubject with reſerve, but it was evident ſhe diſapproved Lady Louiſa's choice. She ſpoke in terms of the higheſt eſteem of Lord Orville, calling him, in Marmontel's words, *Un jeune homme comme il y en a peu.*

I did not think this converſation very agreeably interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Lovel. Indeed I am heartily ſorry he is now at the Hot-wells. He made his compliments with the moſt obſequious reſpect to Mrs. Beaumont, but took no ſort of notice of any other perſon.

In

In a few minutes Lady Louiſa Larpent made her appearance. The ſame manners prevailed; for courtſying, with, "I hope you are well, Ma'am," to Mrs. Beaumont, ſhe paſſed ſtraight forward to her ſeat on the ſofa, where, leaning her head on her hand, ſhe caſt her languiſhing eyes round the room, with a vacant ſtare, as if determined, though ſhe looked, not to ſee who was in it.

Mr. Lovel, preſently approaching her, with reverence the moſt profound, hoped her Ladyſhip was not indiſpoſed.

"Mr. Lovel!" cried ſhe, raiſing her head, "I declare I did not ſee you: Have you been here long?"

"By my *watch*, Madam," ſaid he, "only five minutes,—but by your Ladyſhip's abſence, as many hours."

"O! now I think of it," cried ſhe, "I am very angry with you,—ſo go along, do, for I ſha'n't ſpeak to you all day."

"Heaven forbid your La'ſhip's diſpleaſure ſhould laſt ſo long! in ſuch cruel circumſtances, a day would ſeem an age. But in what have I been ſo unfortunate as to offend?"

"O, you half killed me, the other morning, with terror! I have not yet recovered from my fright. How could you be ſo cruel as to drive your phaeton againſt my Lord Merton's?"

"'Pon honour, Ma'am, your La'ſhip does me wrong; it was all owing to the horſes,—there was no curbing them. I proteſt I ſuffered more than your Ladyſhip, from the terror of alarming you."

Juſt then entered Lord Merton, ſtalking up to Mrs. Beaumont, to whom alone he bowed, he hoped he had not made her wait; and then advancing to Lady Louiſa, ſaid, in a careleſs manner, "How is your Ladyſhip this morning?"

"Not well at all," anſwered ſhe; "I have been dying with the head-ach ever ſince I got up."

"Indeed!" cried he, with a countenance wholly unmoved, "I am very unhappy to hear it. But ſhould not your Ladyſhip have ſome advice?"

"I am quite ſick of advice," anſwered ſhe; "Mr. Ridgeway has but juſt left me,—but he has done me no good. Nobody here knows what is the matter with me, yet they all ſee how indifferent I am."

"Your Ladyſhip's conſtitution," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "is infinitely delicate."

"Indeed it is," cried ſhe, in a low voice, "I am *nerve* all over!"

"I am glad, however," ſaid Lord Merton, "that you did not take the air this morning, for Coverley has been driving againſt me as if he was mad: he has got

got two of the fineſt ſpirited horſes I ever ſaw."

"Pray, my Lord," cried ſhe, "why did not you bring Mr. Coverley with you? he's a droll creature; I like him monſtrouſly."

"Why, he promiſed to be here as ſoon as me. I ſuppoſe he'll come before dinner's over."

In the midſt of this trifling converſation, Lord Orville made his appearance. O how different was his addreſs! how ſuperior did he look and move, to all about him! Having paid his reſpects to Mrs. Beaumont, and then to Mrs. Selwyn, he came up to me, and ſaid, "I hope Miſs Anville has not ſuffered from the fatigue of Monday morning!" Then, turning to Lady Louiſa, who ſeemed rather ſurpriſed at his ſpeaking to me, he added, "Give me leave, Siſter, to introduce Miſs Anville to you."

Lady Louiſa, half-riſing, ſaid, very coldly, that ſhe ſhould be glad of the honour of knowing me; and then, abruptly turning to Lord Merton and Mr. Lovel, continued, in a half-whiſper, her converſation.

For my part, I had riſen and courtſied, and now, feeling very fooliſh, I ſeated myſelf again; firſt I bluſhed at the unexpected politeneſs of Lord Orville, and immediately afterwards, at the contemptuous failure of it in his ſiſter. How can that young lady

see her brother so universally admired for his manners and deportment, and yet be so unamiably opposite to him in her's! But while *his* mind, enlarged and noble, rises superior to the little prejudices of rank, *her's*, feeble and unsteady, sinks beneath their influence.

Lord Orville, I am sure, was hurt and displeased: he bit his lips, and turning from her, addressed himself wholly to me, till we were summoned to dinner. Do you think I was not grateful for his attention? yes, indeed, and every angry idea I had entertained, was totally obliterated.

As we were seating ourselves at the table, Mr. Coverley came into the room: he made a thousand apologies in a breath for being so late, but said he had been retarded by a little accident, for that he had overturned his phaeton, and broke it all to pieces. Lady Louisa screamed at this intelligence, and looking at Lord Merton, declared she would never go into a phaeton again.

"O," cried he, "never mind Jack Coverley, for he does not know how to drive."

"My Lord," cried Mr. Coverley, "I'll drive against *you* for a thousand pounds."

"Done!" returned the other; "Name your day, and we'll each chuse a judge."

"The

"The ſooner the better," cried Mr. Coverley; "to-morrow, if the carriage can be repaired."

"Theſe enterpriſes," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "are very proper for men of rank, ſince 'tis a million to one but both parties will be incapacitated for any better employment."

"For Heaven's ſake," cried Lady Louiſa, changing colour, "don't talk ſo ſhockingly! Pray, my Lord, pray, Mr. Coverley, don't alarm me in this manner."

"Compoſe yourſelf, Lady Louiſa," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont, "the gentlemen will think better of the ſcheme; they are neither of them in earneſt."

"The very mention of ſuch a ſcheme," ſaid Lady Louiſa, taking out her ſalts, "makes me tremble all over! Indeed, my Lord, you have frightened me to death! I ſha'n't eat a morſel of dinner."

"Permit me," ſaid Lord Orville, "to propoſe ſome other ſubject for the preſent, and we will diſcuſs this matter another time."

"Pray, Brother, excuſe me; my Lord muſt give me his word to drop this project,—for, I declare, it has made me ſick as death."

"To compromiſe the matter," ſaid Lord Orville, "ſuppoſe, if both parties are unwilling

willing to give up the bet, that, to make the ladies easy, we change its object to something less dangerous?"

This proposal was so strongly seconded by all the party, that both Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley were obliged to comply with it; and it was then agreed that the affair should be finally settled in the afternoon.

"I shall now be entirely out of conceit with phaetons again," said Mrs. Selwyn, "though Lord Orville had almost reconciled me to them."

"My Lord Orville!" cried the witty Mr. Coverley, "why, my Lord Orville is as careful,—egad, as careful as an old woman! Why, I'd drive a one-horse cart against my Lord's phaeton for a hundred guineas!"

This sally occasioned much laughter; for Mr. Coverley, I find, is regarded as a man of infinite humour.

"Perhaps, Sir," said Mrs. Selwyn, "you have not discovered the *reason* my Lord Orville is so careful?"

"Why, no, Ma'am, I must own, I never heard any particular reason for it."

"Why then, Sir, I'll tell it you; and I believe you will confess it to be *very* particular; his Lordship's friends are not yet tired of him."

Lord Orville laughed and bowed. Mr. Coverley, a little confuſed, turned to Lord Merton, and ſaid, "No foul play, my Lord! I remember your Lordſhip recommended me to the notice of this lady the other morning, and, egad, I believe you have been doing me the ſame office to-day."

"Give you joy, Jack!" cried Lord Merton, with a loud laugh.

After this, the converſation turned wholly upon eating, a ſubject which was diſcuſſed with the utmoſt delight; and, had I not known they were men of rank and faſhion, I ſhould have imagined that Lord Merton, Mr. Lovel, and Mr. Coverley, had all been profeſſed cooks, for they diſplayed ſo much knowledge of ſauces and made diſhes, and of the various methods of dreſſing the ſame things, that I am perſuaded they muſt have given much time, and much ſtudy, to make themſelves ſuch adepts in this *art*. It would be very difficult to determine, whether they were moſt to be diſtinguiſhed as *gluttons*, or *epicures*; for they were, at once, dainty and voracious, underſtood the right and the wrong of every diſh, and alike emptied the one and the other. I ſhould have been quite ſick of their remarks, had I not been entertained by ſeeing that Lord Orville, who, I am

ſure, was equally diſguſted, not only read my ſentiments, but, by his countenance, communicated to me his own.

When dinner was over, Mrs. Beaumont recommended the gentlemen to the care of Lord Orville, and then attended the ladies to the drawing-room.

The converſation, till tea-time, was extremely inſipid; Mrs. Selwyn reſerved herſelf for the gentlemen, Mrs. Beaumont was grave, and Lady Louiſa languid.

But, at tea, every body revived; we were joined by the gentlemen, and gaiety took place of dulneſs.

Since I, as Mr. Lovel ſays, am *Nobody* *, I ſeated myſelf quietly at a window, and not very near to any body: Lord Merton, Mr. Coverley, and Mr. Lovel, ſeverally paſſed me without notice, and ſurrounded the chair of Lady Louiſa Larpent. I muſt own, I was rather piqued at the behaviour of Mr. Lovel, as he had formerly known me. It is true, I moſt ſincerely deſpiſe his foppery, yet I ſhould be grieved to meet with *contempt* from any body. But I was by no means ſorry to find, that Lord Merton was determined not to know me before Lady Louiſa, as his neglect relieved me from much embarraſſ-

* Vol. I. p. 48.

ment.

ment. As to Mr. Coverley, his attention or diſregard were equally indifferent to me. Yet, altogether, I felt extremely uncomfortable in finding myſelf conſidered in a light very inferior to the reſt of the company.

But, when Lord Orville appeared, the ſcene changed: he came up ſtairs laſt, and ſeeing me ſit alone, not only ſpoke to me directly, but drew a chair next mine, and honoured me with his entire attention.

He enquired very particularly after my health, and hoped I had already found benefit from the Briſtol air. "How little did I imagine," added he, "when I had laſt the pleaſure of ſeeing you in town, that ill health would, in ſo ſhort a time, have brought you hither! I am aſhamed of myſelf for the ſatisfaction I feel at ſeeing you,—yet, how can I help it!"

He then enquired after the Mirvan family, and ſpoke of Mrs. Mirvan in terms of moſt juſt praiſe. "She is gentle and amiable," ſaid he, "a true feminine character."

"Yes, indeed," anſwered I, "and her ſweet daughter, to ſay every thing of her at once, is juſt the daughter ſuch a mother deſerves."

"I am glad of it," ſaid he, "for both their ſakes, as ſuch near relations muſt al-

ways reflect credit or disgrace on each other."

After this, he began to speak of the beauties of Clifton; but, in a few moments, he was interrupted by a call from the company to discuss the affair of the wager. Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley, though they had been discoursing upon the subject some time, could not fix upon the thing that satisfied them both.

When they asked the assistance of Lord Orville, he proposed that every body present should vote something, and that the two gentlemen should draw lots which, from the several votes, should decide the bet.

"We must then begin with the ladies," said Lord Orville; and applied to Mrs. Selwyn.

"With all my heart," answered she, with her usual readiness; "and, since the gentlemen are not allowed to risk their *necks*, suppose we decide the bet by their *heads*?"

"By our heads?" cried Mr. Coverley; "Egad, I don't understand you."

"I will then explain myself more fully. As I doubt not but you are both excellent classics, suppose, for the good of your own memories, and the entertainment and surprise of the company, the thousand pounds

ſhould fall to the ſhare of him who can repeat by heart the longeſt ode of Horace?"

Nobody could help laughing; the two gentlemen applied to excepted; who ſeemed, each of them, rather at a loſs in what manner to receive this unexpected propoſal. At length Mr. Coverley, bowing low, ſaid, "Will your Lordſhip pleaſe to begin?"

"Devil take me if I do!" anſwered he, turning on his heel, and ſtalking to the window.

"Come, Gentlemen," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "why do you heſitate? I am ſure you cannot be afraid of a weak *woman*: beſides, if you ſhould chance to be out, Mr. Lovel, I dare ſay, will have the goodneſs to aſſiſt you."

The laugh, now, turned againſt Mr. Lovel, whoſe change of countenance manifeſted no great pleaſure at the tranſition.

"Me, Madam!" ſaid he, colouring, "no, really I muſt beg to be excuſed."

"Why ſo, Sir?"

"Why ſo, Ma'am?—Why, really,—as to that,—'pon honour, Ma'am, you are rather—a little ſevere;—for how is it poſſible for a man who is in the Houſe, to ſtudy the claſſics? I aſſure you, Ma'am," (with an affected ſhrug) "I find quite buſineſs enough for *my* poor head, in ſtudying politics."

"But,

"But, did you ſtudy politics at ſchool, and at the univerſity?"

"At the univerſity!" repeated he with an embarraſſed look; "why, as to that, Ma'am,—no, I can't ſay I did; but then, what with riding,—and—and—and ſo forth, —really one has not much time, even at the univerſity, for mere reading."

"But, to be ſure, Sir, you *have* read the claſſics?"

"O dear, yes, Ma'am!—very often,—but not very—not very lately."

"Which of the odes do you recommend to theſe gentlemen to begin with?"

"Which of the odes!—Really, Ma'am, as to that, I have no very particular choice,—for, to own the truth, that Horace was never a very great favourite with me."

"In truth I believe you!" ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, very drily.

Lord Merton, again advancing into the circle, with a nod and a laugh, ſaid, "Give you joy, Lovel!"

Lord Orville next applied to Mrs. Beaumont for her vote.

"It would very agreeably remind me of paſt times," ſaid ſhe, "when *bowing* was in faſhion, if the bet was to depend upon the beſt-made bow."

"Egad, my Lord!" cried Mr. Coverley,

ley, "there I ſhould beat you hollow, for your Lordſhip never bows at all."

"And, pray Sir, do *you?*" ſaid Mrs. Selwyn.

"Do *I*, Ma'am?" cried he, "Why, only ſee!"

"I proteſt," cried ſhe, "I ſhould have taken *that* for a *ſhrug*, if you had not told me 'twas a bow."

"My Lord," cried Mr. Coverley, "let's practiſe;" and then, moſt ridiculouſly, they pranced about the room, making bows.

"We muſt now," ſaid Lord Orville, turning to me, "call upon Miſs Anville."

"O no, my Lord," cried I, "indeed I have nothing to propoſe." He would not, however, be refuſed, but urged me ſo much to ſay *ſomething*, that at laſt, not to make him wait any longer, I ventured to propoſe an extempore couplet upon ſome given ſubject.

Mr. Coverley inſtantly made me a bow, or, according to Mrs. Selwyn, a *ſhrug*, crying, "Thank you, Ma'am; egad, that's my *fort!*—Why, my Lord, the Fates ſeem againſt you."

Lady Louiſa was then applied to; and every body ſeemed eager to hear her opinion. "I don't know what to ſay, I de-

"clare,"

clare," cried she, affectedly; "can't you pass me?"

"By no means!" said Lord Merton.

"Is it possible your Ladyship can make so cruel a request?" said Mr. Lovel.

"Egad," cried Mr. Coverly, "if your Ladyship does not help us in this dilemma, we shall be forced to return to our phaetons."

"Oh," cried Lady Louisa, screaming, "you frightful creature, you, how can you be so abominable?"

I believe this trifling lasted near half an hour, when, at length, every body being tired, it was given up, and she said she would consider against another time.

Lord Orville now called upon Mr. Lovel, who, after about ten minutes deliberation, proposed, with a most important face, to determine the wager by who should draw the longest straw!

I had much difficulty to forbear laughing at this unmeaning scheme; but saw, to my great surprise, not the least change of countenance in any other person: and, since we came home, Mrs. Selwyn has informed me, that to *draw straws* is a fashion of betting by no means uncommon! Good God! my dear Sir, does it not seem as if money were of no value or service, since those who

who poſſeſs, ſquander it away in a manner ſo infinitely abſurd!

It now only remained for Lord Orville to ſpeak; and the attention of the company ſhewed the expectations he had raiſed; yet, I believe, they by no means prevented his propoſal from being heard with amazement; for it was no other, than that the money ſhould be his due, who, according to the opinion of two judges, ſhould bring the worthieſt object with whom to ſhare it!

They all ſtared, without ſpeaking. Indeed, I believe every one, for a moment at leaſt, experienced ſomething like ſhame, from having either propoſed or countenanced an extravagance ſo uſeleſs and frivolous. For my part, I was ſo much ſtruck and affected by a rebuke ſo noble to theſe ſpendthrifts, that I felt my eyes filled with tears.

The ſhort ſilence, and momentary reflection into which the company was ſurpriſed, Mr. Coverley was the firſt to diſpel, by ſaying, "Egad, my Lord, your Lordſhip has a moſt remarkable odd way of taking things."

"Faith," ſaid the incorrigible Lord Merton, "if this ſcheme takes, I ſhall fix upon my Swiſs to ſhare with me; for I don't know a worthier fellow breathing."

After

After a few more of these attempts at wit, the two gentlemen agreed that they would settle the affair the next morning.

The conversation then took a different turn, but I did not give it sufficient attention to write any account of it. Not long after, Lord Orville resuming his seat near mine, said, "Why is Miss Anville so thoughtful?"

"I am sorry, my Lord," said I, "to consider myself among those who have so justly incurred your censure."

"My censure!—you amaze me!"

"Indeed, my Lord, you have made me quite ashamed of myself, for having given my vote so foolishly, when an opportunity offered, if, like your Lordship, I had had the sense to use it, of shewing some humanity."

"You treat this too seriously," said he, smiling; "and I hardly know if you do not now mean a rebuke to me."

"To you, my Lord!"

"Nay, who are most deserving of it, those who adapt the conversation to the company, or, those who affect to be superior to it?"

"O, my Lord, who else would do you so little justice?"

"I flatter myself," answered he, "that, in fact, your opinion and mine, in this point,

point, are the same, though you condescended to comply with the humour of the company. It is for me, therefore, to apologize for so unseasonable a gravity, which, but for the particular interest that I now take in the affairs of Lord Merton, I should not have been so officious to display."

Such a compliment as this could not fail to reconcile me to myself; and with revived spirits, I entered into a conversation, which he supported with me till Mrs. Selwyn's carriage was announced, and we returned home.

During our ride, Mrs. Selwyn very much surprised me, by asking if I thought my health would now permit me to give up my morning walks to the pump-room, for the purpose of spending a week at Clifton? "for this poor Mrs. Beaumont," added she, "is so eager to have a discharge in full of her debt to me, that, out of mere compassion, I am induced to listen to her. Besides, she has always a house full of people, and though they are chiefly fools and coxcombs, yet there is some pleasure in cutting them up."

I begged I might not, by any means, prevent her following her inclination, as my health was now very well established. And so, my dear Sir, to-morrow we are

to

to be, actually, the guests of Mrs. Beaumont.

I am not much delighted at this scheme; for, greatly as I am flattered by the attention of Lord Orville, it is not very comfortable to be neglected by every body else. Besides, as I am sure I owe the particularity of his civility to a generous feeling for my situation, I cannot expect him to support it so long as a week.

How often do I wish, since I am absent from you, that I was under the protection of Mrs. Mirvan! It is true, Mrs. Selwyn is very obliging, and, in every respect, treats me as an equal; but she is contented with behaving well herself, and does not, with a distinguishing politeness, raise and support me with others. Yet I mean not to blame her, for I know she is sincerely my friend; but the fact is, she is herself so much occupied in conversation, when in company, that she has neither leisure nor thought to attend to the silent.

Well, I must take my chance! But I knew not, till now, how requisite are birth and fortune to the attainment of respect and civility.

LETTER IV.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, Sept. 20th.

HERE I am, my dear Sir, under the ſame roof, and inmate of the ſame houſe, as Lord Orville! Indeed, if this were not the caſe, my ſituation would be very diſagreeable, as you will eaſily believe, when I tell you the light in which I am generally conſidered.

"My dear," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "did you ever before meet with that egregious fop, Lovel?"

I very readily ſatisfied her as to my acquaintance with him.

"O then," ſaid ſhe, "I am the leſs ſurpriſed at his ill-nature, ſince he has already injured you."

I begged her to explain herſelf; and then ſhe told me, that while Lord Orville was ſpeaking to me, Lady Louiſa ſaid to Mr. Lovel, "do you know who that is?"

"Why, Ma'am, no, 'pon honour," anſwered he, "I can't abſolutely ſay I do; I only know ſhe is a kind of a toad-eater. She made her firſt appearance in that capacity

city laſt Spring, when ſhe attended Miſs Mirvan, a young lady of Kent."

How cruel is it, my dear Sir, to be thus expoſed to the impertinent ſuggeſtions of a man who is determined to do me ill offices! Lady Louiſa may well deſpiſe a *toad-eater*; but, thank Heaven, her brother has not heard, or does not credit, the mortifying appellation. Mrs. Selwyn ſaid, ſhe would adviſe me to *pay my court* to this Mr. Lovel; "for," ſaid ſhe, "though he is malicious, he is faſhionable, and may do you ſome harm in the great world." But I ſhould diſdain myſelf as much as I do him, were I capable of ſuch duplicity as to flatter a man who I ſcorn and deſpiſe.

We were received by Mrs. Beaumont with great civility, and by Lord Orville with ſomething more. As to Lady Louiſa, ſhe ſcarcely perceived that we were in the room.

There has been company here all day; part of which I have ſpent moſt happily; for after tea, when the ladies played at cards, Lord Orville, who does not, and I, who cannot play, were conſequently at our own diſpoſal; and then his Lordſhip entered into a converſation with me, which laſted till ſupper-time.

Almoſt inſenſibly, I find the conſtraint, the reſerve, I have been wont to feel in his

his preſence, wear away; the politeneſs, the ſweetneſs, with which he ſpeaks to me, reſtore all my natural chearfulneſs, and make me almoſt as eaſy as he is himſelf; and the more ſo, as, if I may judge by his looks, I am rather raiſed, than ſunk, of late in his opinion.

I aſked him, how the bet was, at laſt, to be decided? He told me, that, to his great ſatisfaction, the parties had been prevailed upon to lower the ſum from one thouſand to one hundred pounds; and that they had agreed it ſhould be determined, by a race between two old women, one of which was to be choſen by each ſide, and both were to be proved more than eighty years of age, though, in other reſpects, ſtrong and healthy as poſſible.

When I expreſſed my ſurpriſe at this extraordinary method of ſpending ſo much money, "I am charmed," ſaid he, "at the novelty of meeting with one ſo unhackneyed in the world, as not to be yet influenced by cuſtom to forget the uſe of reaſon: for certain it is, that the prevalence of faſhion makes the greateſt abſurdities paſs uncenſured, and the mind naturally accommodates itſelf, even to the moſt ridiculous improprieties, if they occur frequently."

"I ſhould have hoped," ſaid I, "that the humane propoſal made yeſterday by your

your Lordſhip, would have had more effect."

"O," cried he, laughing, "I was ſo far from expecting any ſucceſs, that I ſhall think myſelf very fortunate if I eſcape the wit of Mr. Coverley in a lampoon! yet I ſpoke openly, becauſe I do not wiſh to conceal that I am no friend to gaming."

After this, he took up the New Bath Guide, and read it with me till ſupper-time. In our way down ſtairs, Lady Louiſa ſaid, "I thought, Brother, you were engaged this evening?"

"Yes, Siſter," anſwered he, "and I *have* been engaged." And he bowed to me with an air of gallantry that rather confuſed me.

September 23d.

Almoſt inſenſibly have three days glided on ſince I wrote laſt, and ſo ſerenely, that, but for your abſence, I could not have formed a wiſh. My reſidence here is much happier than I had dared expect. The attention with which Lord Orville honours me is as uniform as it is flattering, and ſeems to reſult from a benevolence of heart that proves him as much a ſtranger to caprice as to pride; for, as his particular civilities aroſe from a generous reſentment at ſeeing me neglected, ſo will they, I truſt

truſt, continue, as long as I ſhall, in any degree, deſerve them. I am now not merely eaſy, but even gay in his preſence: ſuch is the effect of true politeneſs, that it baniſhes all reſtraint and embarraſſment. When we walk out, he condeſcends to be my companion, and keeps by my ſide all the way we go. When we read, he marks the paſſages moſt worthy to be noticed, draws out my ſentiments, and favours me with his own. At table, where he always ſits next to me, he obliges me by a thouſand nameleſs attentions, while the diſtinguiſhing good-breeding with which he treats me, prevents my repining at the viſibly-felt ſuperiority of the reſt of the company. A thouſand occaſional meetings could not have brought us to that degree of ſocial freedom, which four days ſpent under the ſame roof have, inſenſibly, been productive of: and, as my only friend in this houſe, Mrs. Selwyn, is too much engroſſed in perpetual converſation to attend much to me, Lord Orville ſeems to regard me as a helpleſs ſtranger, and, as ſuch, to think me entitled to his good offices and protection. Indeed, my dear Sir, I have reaſon to hope, that the depreciating opinion he formerly entertained of me is ſucceeded by one infinitely more partial.—It may be that I flatter myſelf, but yet his looks, his atten-

tions, his desire of drawing me into conversation, and his solicitude to oblige me, all conspire to make me hope I do not. In short, my dearest Sir, these last four happy days would repay me for months of sorrow and pain!

LETTER V.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, Sept. 24th.

THIS morning I came down stairs very early, and supposing that the family would not assemble for some time, I strolled out, purposing to take a long walk, in the manner I was wont to do at Berry Hill, before breakfast. But I had scarce shut the garden-gate, before I was met by a gentleman, who, immediately bowing to me, I recollected to be the unhappy Mr. Macartney. Very much surprised, I courtsied, and stopped till he came up to me. He was still in mourning, but looked better than when I saw him last, though he had the same air of melancholy which so much struck me at first sight of him.

Addressing me with the utmost respect, "I am happy, Madam," said he, "to have

have met with you ſo ſoon. I came to Briſtol but yeſterday, and have had no ſmall difficulty in tracing you to Clifton.

"Did you know, then, of my being here?"

"I did, Madam; the ſole motive of my journey was to ſee you. I have been to Berry Hill, and there I had my intelligence, and, at the ſame time, the unwelcome information of your ill health.

"Good God! Sir,—and can you poſſibly have taken ſo much trouble?"

"Trouble! Oh, Madam, could there be any, to return you, the moment I had the power, my perſonal acknowledgments for your goodneſs"

I then enquired after Madame Duval, and the Snow-Hill family. He told me, they were all well, and that Madame Duval propoſed ſoon returning to Paris. When I congratulated him upon looking better, "It is *yourſelf*, Madam," ſaid he, "you ſhould congratulate, for to your humanity alone it may now be owing that I exiſt at all." He then told me, that his affairs were now in a leſs deſperate ſituation, and that he hoped, by the aſſiſtance of time and reaſon, to accommodate his mind to a more chearful ſubmiſſion to his fate. "The intereſt you ſo generouſly took in my affliction," added he, "aſſures

me you will not be diſpleaſed to hear of my better fortune; I was therefore eager to acquaint you with it." He then told me, that his friend, the moment he had received his letter, quitted Paris, and flew to give him his perſonal aſſiſtance and conſolation. With a heavy heart he acknowledged, he accepted it; "but yet," he added, "I *have* accepted it, and therefore, as bound equally by duty and honour, my firſt ſtep was to haſten to the benefactreſs of my diſtreſs, and to return," (preſenting me ſomething in a paper) "the only part of my obligations that *can* be returned; for the reſt, I have nothing but my gratitude to offer, and muſt always be contented to conſider myſelf her debtor."

I congratulated him moſt ſincerely upon his dawning proſperity, but begged he would not deprive me of the pleaſure of being his friend, and declined receiving the money, till his affairs were more ſettled.

While this point was in agitation, I heard Lord Orville's voice enquiring of the gardener if he had ſeen me? I immediately opened the garden-gate, and his Lordſhip, advancing to me with quickneſs, ſaid, "Good God, Miſs Anville, have you been out, alone? Breakfaſt has been ready ſome time, and I have been round the garden in ſearch of you."

"Your

"Your Lordſhip has been very good," ſaid I; "but I hope you have not waited."

"Not waited!" repeated he, ſmiling, "Do you think we could ſit down quietly to breakfaſt, with the idea that you had run away from us? But come," (offering to hand me) "if we do not return, they will ſuppoſe *I* am run away too; and they very naturally may, as they know the attraction of the magnet that draws me."

"I will come, my Lord," ſaid I, rather embarraſſed, "in two minutes." Then, turning to Mr. Macartney, with yet more embarraſſment, I wiſhed him good morning.

He advanced towards the garden, with the paper ſtill in his hand.

"No, no," cried I, "ſome other time."

"May I then, Madam, have the honour of ſeeing you again?"

I did not dare take the liberty of inviting any body to the houſe of Mrs. Beaumont, nor yet had I the preſence of mind to make an excuſe; and therefore, not knowing how to refuſe him, I ſaid, "Perhaps you may be this way again to-morrow morning,—and I believe I ſhall walk out before breakfaſt."

He bowed, and went away; while I,

turning again to Lord Orville, saw his countenance so much altered, that I was frightened at what I had so hastily said. He did not again offer me his hand, but walked, silent and slow, by my side. Good Heaven! thought I, what may he not suppose from this adventure? May he not, by my desire of meeting Mr. Macartney to-morrow, imagine it was by design I walked out to meet him to-day? Tormented by this apprehension, I determined to avail myself of the freedom which his behaviour since I came hither has encouraged; and, since he would not ask any questions, begin an explanation myself. I therefore slackened my pace, to gain time, and then said, "Was not your Lordship surprised to see me speaking with a stranger?"

"A stranger!" repeated he; "is it possible that gentleman can be a stranger to you?"

"No, my Lord,"—said I, stammering, "not to *me*,—but only it might look—he might seem—"

"No, believe me," said he, with a forced smile, "I could never suppose Miss Anville would make an appointment with a stranger."

"An appointment, my Lord!" repeated I, colouring violently.

"Pardon

"Pardon me, Madam," anſwered he, "but I thought I had heard one."

I was ſo much confounded, that I could not ſpeak; yet, finding he walked quietly on, I could not endure he ſhould make his own interpretation of my ſilence; and therefore, as ſoon as I recovered from my ſurpriſe, I ſaid, "Indeed, my Lord, you are much miſtaken,—Mr. Macartney had particular buſineſs with me—and I could not,—I knew not how to refuſe ſeeing him,—but indeed, my Lord—I had not,—he had not,"—I ſtammered ſo terribly that I could not go on.

"I am very ſorry," ſaid he, gravely, "that I have been ſo unfortunate as to diſtreſs you; but I ſhould not have followed you, had I not imagined you were merely walked out for the air."

"And ſo I was!" cried I eagerly, "indeed, my Lord, I was! My meeting with Mr. Macartney was quite accidental; and if your Lordſhip thinks there is any impropriety in my ſeeing him to-morrow, I am ready to give up that intention.

"If *I* think!" ſaid he, in a tone of ſurpriſe; "ſurely Miſs Anville muſt beſt judge for herſelf! ſurely ſhe cannot leave the arbitration of a point ſo delicate, to one who is ignorant of all the circumſtances which attend it?"

"If," ſaid I, "it was worth your Lordſhip's time to hear them,—you ſhould *not* be ignorant of the circumſtances which attend it."

"The ſweetneſs of Miſs Anville's diſpoſition," ſaid he, in a ſoftened voice, "I have long admired, and the offer of a communication which does me ſo much honour, is too grateful to me not to be eagerly caught at."

Juſt then, Mrs. Selwyn opened the parlour window, and our converſation ended. I was rallied upon my paſſion for ſolitary walking, but no queſtions were aſked me.

When breakfaſt was over, I hoped to have had ſome opportunity of ſpeaking with Lord Orville; but Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley came in, and inſiſted upon his opinion of the ſpot they had fixed upon for the old women's race. The ladies declared they would be of the party, and, accordingly, we all went.

The race is to be run in Mrs. Beaumont's garden; the two gentlemen are as anxious as if their joint lives depended upon it. They have, at length, fixed upon objects, but have found great difficulty in perſuading them to practiſe running, in order to try their ſtrength. This grand affair is to be decided next Thurſday.

When

When we returned to the houſe, the entrance of more company ſtill prevented my having any converſation with Lord Orville. I was very much chagrined, as I knew he was engaged at the Hotwells in the afternoon. Seeing, therefore, no probability of ſpeaking to him before the time of my meeting Mr. Macartney arrived, I determined that, rather than riſk his ill opinion, I would leave Mr. Macartney to his own ſuggeſtions.

Yet, when I reflected upon his peculiar ſituation, his poverty, his ſadneſs, and, more than all the reſt, the idea I knew he entertained of what he calls his obligations to me, I could not reſolve upon a breach of promiſe, which might be attributed to cauſes of all others the moſt offenſive to one whom misfortune has made extremely ſuſpicious of ſlights and contempt.

After the moſt uneaſy conſideration, I at length determined upon writing an excuſe, which would, at once, ſave me from either meeting or affronting him. I therefore begged Mrs. Selwyn's leave to ſend her man to the Hotwells, which ſhe inſtantly granted; and then I wrote the following note.

To Mr. Macartney.

Sir,

AS it will not be in my power to walk out to-morrow morning, I would by no means give you the trouble of coming to Clifton. I hope, however, to have the pleasure of seeing you before you quit Briſtol. I am,

Sir,

Your obedient ſervant,

EVELINA ANVILLE.

I deſired the ſervant to enquire at the Pump-room where Mr. Macartney lived, and returned to the parlour.

As ſoon as the company diſperſed, the ladies retired to dreſs. I then, unexpectedly, found myſelf alone with Lord Orville; who, the moment I roſe to follow Mrs. Selwyn, advanced to me, and ſaid, "Will Miſs Anville pardon my impatience, if I remind her of the promiſe ſhe was ſo good as to make me this morning?"

I ſtopped, and would have returned to my ſeat, but, before I had time, the ſervants came to lay the cloth. He retreated, and went towards the window; and while I was conſidering in what manner to begin, I could not help aſking myſelf what *right* I had

had to communicate the affairs of Mr. Macartney; and I doubted whether, to clear myſelf from one act of imprudence, I had not committed another.

Diſtreſſed by this reflection, I thought it beſt to quit the room, and give myſelf ſome time for conſideration before I ſpoke; and therefore, only ſaying I muſt haſten to dreſs, I ran up ſtairs: rather abruptly, I own, and ſo, I fear, Lord Orville muſt think; yet what could I do? unuſed to the ſituations in which I find myſelf, and embarraſſed by the ſlighteſt difficulties, I ſeldom, till too late, diſcover how I ought to act.

Juſt as we were all aſſembled to dinner, Mrs. Selwyn's man, coming into the parlour, preſented to me a letter, and ſaid, "I can't find out Mr. Macartney, Madam; but the poſt-office people will let you know if they hear of him."

I was extremely aſhamed of this public meſſage; and, meeting the eyes of Lord Orville, which were earneſtly fixed on me, my confuſion redoubled, and I knew not which way to look. All dinner-time, he was as ſilent as myſelf, and the moment it was in my power, I left the table, and went to my own room. Mrs. Selwyn preſently followed me, and her queſtions obliged me to own almoſt all the particulars of my ac-

quaintance with Mr. Macartney, in order to excuſe my writing to him. She ſaid it was a moſt romantic affair, and ſpoke her ſentiments with great ſeverity, declaring that ſhe had no doubt but he was an adventurer and an impoſtor.

And now, my dear Sir, I am totally at a loſs what I ought to do: the more I reflect, the more ſenſible I am of the utter impropriety, nay, treachery, of revealing the ſtory, and publiſhing the misfortunes and poverty of Mr. Macartney? who has an undoubted right to my ſecrecy and diſcretion, and whoſe letter charges me to regard his communication as ſacred.—And yet, the appearance of myſtery,—perhaps ſomething worſe, which this affair muſt have to Lord Orville,—his ſerioufneſs,—and the promiſe I have made him, are inducements ſcarce to be reſiſted for truſting him, with the openneſs he has reaſon to expect from me.

I am equally diſtreſſed, too, whether or not I ſhould ſee Mr. Macartney to-morrow morning.

Oh, Sir, could I now be enlightened by your counſel, from what anxiety and perplexity ſhould I be relieved!

But no,—I ought not to betray Mr. Macartney, and I will not forfeit a confidence which would never have been repoſed

in me, but from a reliance upon my honour which I ſhould bluſh to find myſelf unworthy of. Deſirous as I am of the good opinion of Lord Orville, I will endeavour to act as if I was guided by your advice, and, making it my ſole aim to *deſerve* it, leave to time and to fate my ſucceſs or diſappointment.

Since I have formed this reſolution, my mind is more at eaſe; but I will not finiſh my letter till the affair is decided.

Sept. 25th.

I roſe very early this morning, and, after a thouſand different plans, not being able to reſolve upon giving poor Mr. Macartney leave to ſuppoſe I neglected him, I thought it incumbent upon me to keep my word, ſince he had not received my letter; I therefore determined to make my own apologies, not to ſtay with him two minutes, and to excuſe myſelf from meeting him any more.

Yet, uncertain whether I was wrong or right, it was with fear and trembling that I opened the garden-gate,—judge, then, of my feelings, when the firſt object I ſaw was Lord Orville!—he, too, looked extremely diſconcerted, and ſaid, in a heſitating manner, "Pardon me, Madam,—I did not intend,—I did not imagine you would

would have been here ſo ſoon—or,—or I would not have come."—And then, with a haſty bow, he paſſed me, and proceeded to the garden.

I was ſcarce able to ſtand, ſo greatly did I feel myſelf ſhocked; but, upon my ſaying, almoſt involuntarily, "Oh, my Lord!"—he turned back, and, after a ſhort pauſe, ſaid, "Did you ſpeak to *me*, Madam?"

I could not immediately anſwer; I ſeemed *choaked*, and was even forced to ſupport myſelf by the garden-gate.

Lord Orville, ſoon recovering his dignity, ſaid, "I know not how to apologiſe for being, juſt now, at this place;—and I cannot immediately,—if *ever*,—clear myſelf from the imputation of impertinent curioſity, to which I fear you will attribute it: however, at preſent, I will only entreat your pardon, without detaining you any longer." Again he bowed, and left me.

For ſome moments, I remained fixed to the ſame ſpot, and in the ſame poſition, immoveably as if I had been transformed to ſtone. My firſt impulſe was to call him back, and inſtantly tell him the whole affair; but I checked this deſire, though I would have given the world to have indulged it; ſomething like pride aided what I thought due to Mr. Macartney, and I determined

termined not only to keep his ſecret, but to delay any ſort of explanation, till Lord Orville ſhould condeſcend to requeſt it.

Slowly he walked, and before he entered the houſe, he looked back, but haſtily withdrew his eyes, upon finding I obſerved him.

Indeed, my dear Sir, you cannot eaſily imagine a ſituation more uncomfortable than mine was at that time; to be ſuſpected by Lord Orville of any clandeſtine actions, wounded my ſoul; I was too much diſcompoſed to wait for Mr. Macartney, nor, in truth, could I endure to have the deſign of my ſtaying ſo well known. Yet I was ſo extremely agitated, that I could hardly move, and, I have reaſon to believe, Lord Orville, from the parlour-window, ſaw me tottering along, for, before I had taken five ſteps, he came out, and haſtening to meet me, ſaid, "I fear you are not well; pray allow me, (offering his arm) to aſſiſt you."

"No, my Lord," ſaid I, with all the reſolution I could aſſume; yet I was affected by an attention, at that time ſo little expected, and forced to turn away my head to conceal my emotion.

"You *muſt*," ſaid he, with earneſtneſs, "indeed you muſt,—I am ſure you are not well;—refuſe me not the honour of aſſiſt-

ing you;" and, almoſt forcibly, he took my hand, and drawing it under his arm, obliged me to lean upon him. That I ſubmitted was partly the effect of ſurpriſe at an earneſtneſs ſo uncommon in Lord Orville, and partly, that I did not, juſt then, dare truſt my voice to make any objection.

When we came to the houſe, he led me into the parlour, and to a chair, and begged to know if I would not have a glaſs of water.

"No, my Lord, I thank you," ſaid I, "I am perfectly recovered;" and, riſing, I walked to the window, where, for ſome time, I pretended to be occupied in looking at the garden.

Determined as I was to act honourably by Mr. Macartney, I yet moſt anxiouſly wiſhed to be reſtored to the good opinion of Lord Orville; but his ſilence, and the thoughtfulneſs of his air, diſcouraged me from ſpeaking.

My ſituation ſoon grew diſagreeable and embarraſſing, and I reſolved to return to my chamber till breakfaſt was ready. To remain longer, I feared, might ſeem *aſking* for his enquiries; and I was ſure it would ill become me to be more eager to ſpeak, than he was to hear.

Juſt as I reached the door, turning to me

me haſtily, he ſaid, "Are you going, Miſs Anville?"

"I am, my Lord," anſwered I, yet I ſtopped.

"Perhaps to return to — but I beg your pardon!" he ſpoke with a degree of agitation that made me readily comprehend he meant to *the Garden*, and I inſtantly ſaid, "To my own room, my Lord." And again I would have gone; but, convinced by my anſwer that I underſtood him, I believe he was ſorry for the inſinuation; he approached me with a very ſerious air, though, at the ſame time he forced a ſmile, and ſaid, "I know not what evil genius purſues me this morning, but I ſeem deſtined to do or to ſay ſomething I ought not: I am ſo much aſhamed of myſelf, that I can ſcarce ſolicit your forgiveneſs."

"My forgiveneſs! my Lord?" cried I, abaſhed, rather than elated by his condeſcenſion, "ſurely you cannot—you are not ſerious?"

"Indeed never more ſo; yet if I may be my own interpreter, Miſs Anville's countenance pronounces my pardon."

"I know not, my Lord, how any one can *pardon*, who has never been offended."

"You are very good; yet I could expect no leſs from a ſweetneſs of diſpoſition which baffles all compariſon: will you not think

think I am an encroacher, and that I take advantage of your goodneſs, ſhould I once more remind you of the promiſe you vouchſafed me yeſterday?"

"No, indeed; on the contrary, I ſhall be very happy to acquit myſelf in your Lordſhip's opinion."

"Acquittal you need not," ſaid he, leading me again to the window, "yet I own my curioſity is ſtrongly excited."

When I was ſeated, I found myſelf much at a loſs what to ſay; yet, after a ſhort ſilence, aſſuming all the courage in my power, "Will you not, my Lord," ſaid I, "think me trifling and capricious, ſhould I own I have repented the promiſe I made, and ſhould I entreat your Lordſhip not to inſiſt upon my ſtrict performance of it?—I ſpoke ſo haſtily, that I did not, at the time, conſider the impropriety of what I ſaid."

As he was entirely ſilent, and profoundly attentive, I continued to ſpeak without interruption.

"If your Lordſhip, by any other means, knew the circumſtances attending my acquaintance with Mr. Macartney, I am moſt ſure you would yourſelf diſapprove my relating them. He is a gentleman, and has been very unfortunate,—but I am not,—I think,—at liberty to ſay more; yet I am

am ſure, if he knew your Lordſhip wiſhed to hear any particulars of his affairs, he would readily conſent to my acknowledging them;—ſhall I, my Lord, aſk his permiſſion?"

"*His* affairs!" repeated Lord Orville; "by no means, I have not the leaſt curioſity about them."

"I beg your Lordſhip's pardon,—but indeed I had underſtood the contrary."

"Is it poſſible, Madam, you could ſuppoſe the affairs of an utter ſtranger can excite my curioſity?"

The gravity and coldneſs with which he aſked this queſtion, very much abaſhed me; but Lord Orville is the moſt delicate of men, and, preſently recollecting himſelf, he added, "I mean not to ſpeak with indifference of any friend of your's,—far from it; any ſuch will always command my good wiſhes: yet I own I am rather diſappointed; and though I doubt not the juſtice of your reaſon, to which I implicitly ſubmit, you muſt not wonder, that, when upon the point of being honoured with your confidence, I ſhould feel the greateſt regret at finding it withdrawn."

Do you think, my dear Sir, I did not, at that moment, require all my reſolution to guard me from frankly telling him whatever he wiſhed to hear? yet I rejoice that I did

I did not; for added to the actual wrong I ſhould have done, Lord Orville himſelf, when he had heard, would, I am ſure, have blamed me. Fortunately, this thought occurred to me, and I ſaid, "Your Lordſhip ſhall yourſelf be my judge; the promiſe I made, though voluntary, was raſh and inconſiderate; yet, had it concerned myſelf, I would not have heſitated in fulfilling it; but the gentleman whoſe affairs I ſhould be obliged to relate—"

"Pardon me," cried he, "for interrupting you; yet allow me to aſſure you, I have not the ſlighteſt deſire to be acquainted with his affairs, further than what belongs to the motives which induced you yeſterday morning—" He ſtopped; but there was no occaſion to ſay more.

"That, my Lord," cried I, "I will tell you honeſtly. Mr. Macartney had ſome particular buſineſs with me, — and I could not take the liberty to aſk him hither."

"And why not?—Mrs. Beaumont, I am ſure,—"

"I could not, my Lord, think of intruding upon Mrs. Beaumont's complaiſance; and ſo, with the ſame haſty folly I promiſed your Lordſhip, I much *more* raſhly promiſed to meet him."

"And did you?"

"No,

"No, my Lord," ſaid I, colouring, "I returned before he came."

Again, for ſome time, we were both ſilent; yet, unwilling to leave him to reflections which could not but be to my diſadvantage, I ſummoned ſufficient courage to ſay, "There is no young creature, my Lord, who ſo greatly wants, or ſo earneſtly wiſhes for, the advice and aſſiſtance of her friends, as I do; I am new to the world, and unuſed to acting for myſelf, — my intentions are never wilfully blameable, yet I err perpetually!—I have, hitherto, been bleſt with the moſt affectionate of friends, and, indeed, the ableſt of men, to guide and inſtruct me upon every occaſion;—but he is too diſtant, now, to be applied to at the moment I want his aid;—and *here*,—there is not a human being whoſe counſel I can aſk.

"Would to Heaven," cried he, with a countenance from which all coldneſs and gravity were baniſhed, and ſucceeded by the mildeſt benevolence, "that *I* were worthy, — and capable, — of ſupplying the place of ſuch a friend to Miſs Anville!"

"You do me but too much honour," ſaid I; "yet I hope your Lordſhip's candour,—perhaps I ought to ſay indulgence,—will make ſome allowance, on account of

of my inexperience, for behaviour, ſo inconſiderate:—May I, my Lord, hope that you will?"

"May *I*," cried he, "hope that you will pardon the ill-grace with which I have ſubmitted to my diſappointment? and that you will permit me," (kiſſing my hand) "thus to ſeal my peace?"

"*Our* peace, my Lord," ſaid I, with revived ſpirits.

"This, then," ſaid he, again preſſing it to his lips, "for *our* peace: and now,—are we not friends?"

Juſt then, the door opened, and I had only time to withdraw my hand, before the ladies came in to breakfaſt.

I have been, all day, the happieſt of human beings!—to be thus reconciled to Lord Orville, and yet to adhere to my reſolution,—what could I wiſh for more?—he, too, has been very chearful, and more attentive, more obliging to me than ever. Yet Heaven forbid I ſhould again be in a ſimilar ſituation, for I cannot expreſs how much uneaſineſs I have ſuffered from the fear of incurring his ill opinion.

But what will poor Mr. Macartney think of me? happy as I am, I much regret the neceſſity I have been under of diſappointing him.

Adieu, my deareſt Sir.

LETTER VI.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, Sept. 28.

DEAD to the world, and equally inſenſible to its pleaſures or its pains, I long ſince bid adieu to all joy, and defiance to all ſorrow, but what ſhould ſpring from my Evelina,—ſole ſource, to me, of all earthly felicity. How ſtrange, then, is it, that the letter in which ſhe tells me ſhe is the *happieſt of human beings*, ſhould give me the moſt mortal inquietude!

Alas, my child!—that innocence, the firſt, beſt gift of Heaven, ſhould, of all others, be the blindeſt to its own danger,—the moſt expoſed to treachery,—and the leaſt able to defend itſelf, in a world where it is little known, leſs valued, and perpetually deceived!

Would to Heaven you were here!—then, by degrees, and with gentleneſs, I might enter upon a ſubject too delicate for diſtant diſcuſſion. Yet is it too intereſting, and the ſituation too critical, to allow of delay.—Oh my Evelina, your ſituation is critical indeed!—your peace of mind is at ſtake, and every chance for your future happineſs

may

may depend upon the conduct of the preſent moment.

Hitherto I have forborne to ſpeak with you upon the moſt important of all concerns, the ſtate of your heart:—alas, I need no information! I have been ſilent, indeed, but I have not been blind.

Long, and with the deepeſt regret, have I perceived the aſcendancy which Lord Orville has gained upon your mind.—You will ſtart at the mention of his name,—you will tremble every word you read;—I grieve to give pain to my gentle Evelina, but I dare not any longer ſpare her.

Your firſt meeting with Lord Orville was deciſive. Lively, fearleſs, free from all other impreſſions, ſuch a man as you deſcribe him could not fail exciting your admiration, and the more dangerouſly, becauſe he ſeemed as unconſcious of his power as you of your weakneſs; and therefore you had no alarm, either from *his* vanity or *your own* prudence.

Young, animated, entirely off your guard, and thoughtleſs of conſequences, *Imagination* took the reins, and *Reaſon*, ſlow-paced, though ſure-footed, was unequal to a race with ſo eccentric and flighty a companion. How rapid was then my Evelina's progreſs through thoſe regions of fancy and paſſion whither

whither her new guide conducted her!—She ſaw Lord Orville at a ball,—and he was *the moſt amiable of men!*—She met him again at another,—and *he had every virtue under heaven!*

I mean not to depreciate the merit of Lord Orville, who, one myſterious inſtance alone excepted, ſeems to have deſerved the idea you formed of his character; but it was not time, it was not the knowledge of his worth, obtained your regard; your new comrade had not patience to wait any trial; her glowing pencil, dipt in the vivid colours of her creative ideas, painted to you, at the moment of your firſt acquaintance, all the excellencies, all the good and rare qualities, which a great length of time, and intimacy, could alone have really diſcovered.

You flattered yourſelf, that your partiality was the effect of eſteem, founded upon a general love of merit, and a principle of juſtice: and your heart, which fell the ſacrifice of your error, was totally gone ere you ſuſpected it was in danger.

A thouſand times have I been upon the point of ſhewing you the perils of your ſituation; but the ſame inexperience which occaſioned your miſtake, I hoped, with the aſſiſtance of time and abſence, would effect a cure: I was, indeed, moſt unwilling to

deſtroy your illuſion, while I dared hope it might itſelf contribute to the reſtoration of your tranquillity; ſince your ignorance of the danger and force of your attachment, might poſſibly prevent that deſpondency with which young people, in ſimilar circumſtances, are apt to perſuade themſelves that what is only difficult, is abſolutely impoſſible.

But now, ſince you have again met, and are become more intimate than ever, all my hope from ſilence and ſeeming ignorance is at an end.

Awake, then, my dear, my deluded child, awake to the ſenſe of your danger, and exert yourſelf to avoid the evils with which it threatens you,—evils which, to a mind like yours, are moſt to be dreaded, ſecret repining, and concealed, yet conſuming regret! Make a noble effort for the recovery of your peace, which now, with ſorrow I ſee it, depends wholly upon the preſence of Lord Orville. This effort, may, indeed, be painful, but truſt to my experience, when I aſſure you it is requiſite.

You muſt quit him!—his ſight is baneful to your repoſe, his ſociety is death to your future tranquillity! Believe me, my beloved child, my heart aches for your ſuffering, while it dictates its neceſſity.

Could I flatter myſelf that Lord Orville would,

would, indeed, be ſenſible of your worth, and act with a nobleneſs of mind which ſhould prove it congenial to his own, then would I leave my Evelina to the unmoleſted enjoyment of the chearful ſociety and encreaſing regard of a man ſhe ſo greatly admires: but this is not an age in which we may truſt to appearances, and imprudence is much ſooner regretted than repaired. Your health, you tell me, is much mended,—can you then conſent to leave Briſtol?—not abruptly, that I do not deſire, but in a few days from the time you receive this? I will write to Mrs. Selwyn, and tell her how much I wiſh your return; and Mrs. Clinton can take ſufficient care of you.

I have meditated upon every poſſible expedient that might tend to your happineſs, ere I fixed upon exacting from you a compliance which I am convinced will be moſt painful to you;—but I can ſatisfy myſelf in none. This will at leaſt be ſafe, and as to ſucceſs,—we muſt leave it to time.

I am very glad to hear of Mr. Macartney's welfare.

Adieu, my deareſt child; Heaven preſerve and ſtrengthen you!

A. V.

LETTER VII.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Clifton, Sept. 28.

SWEETLY, moſt ſweetly, have two days more paſſed ſince I wrote; but I have been too much engaged to be exact in my journal.

To-day has been leſs tranquil. It was deſtined for the deciſion of the important bet, and has been productive of general confuſion throughout the houſe. It was ſettled that the race ſhould be run at five o'clock in the afternoon. Lord Merton breakfaſted here, and ſtayed till noon. He wanted to engage the Ladies to *bet on his ſide*, in the true ſpirit of gaming, without ſeeing the racers. But he could only prevail on Lady Louiſa, as Mrs. Selwyn ſaid ſhe never laid a wager againſt her own wiſhes, and Mrs. Beaumont would not *take ſides*. As for *me*, I was not applied to. It is impoſſible for negligence to be more pointed, than that of Lord Merton to me, in the preſence of Lady Louiſa.

But, juſt before dinner, I happened to be alone in the drawing-room, when his Lordſhip ſuddenly returned, and coming in with his uſual familiarity, he was beginning,

ginning, "You ſee, Lady Louiſa,—" but ſtopping ſhort, "Pray where's every body gone?"

"Indeed I don't know, my Lord."

He then ſhut the door, and, with a great alteration in his face and manner, advanced eagerly towards me, and ſaid, "How glad I am, my ſweet girl, to meet you, at laſt, alone! By my ſoul, I began to think there was a plot againſt me, for I've never been able to have you a minute to myſelf." And, very freely, he ſeized my hand.

I was ſo much ſurprized at this addreſs, after having been ſo long totally neglected, that I could make no other anſwer than ſtaring at him with unfeigned aſtoniſhment.

"Why now," continued he, "if you was not the cruelleſt little angel in the world, you would have helped me to ſome expedient: for you ſee how I am watched here; Lady Louiſa's eyes are never off me. She gives me a charming foretaſte of the pleaſures of a wife! however, it won't laſt long."

Diſguſted to the greateſt degree, I attempted to draw away my hand, but I believe I ſhould not have ſucceeded, if Mrs. Beaumont had not made her appearance. He turned from me with the greateſt aſſurance, and ſaid, "How are you, Ma'am?—

how is Lady Louisa?—you see I can't live a moment out of the house."

Could you, my dearest Sir, have believed it possible for such effrontery to be in man?

Before dinner, came Mr. Coverley, and before five o'clock, Mr. Lovel and some other company. The place marked out for the race, was a gravel-walk in Mrs. Beaumont's garden, and the length of the ground twenty yards. When we were summoned to the *course*, the two poor old women made their appearance. Though they seemed very healthy for their time of life, they yet looked so weak, so infirm, so feeble, that I could feel no sensation but that of pity at the sight. However, this was not the general sense of the company, for they no sooner came forward, than they were greeted with a laugh from every beholder, Lord Orville excepted, who looked very grave during the whole transaction. Doubtless he must be greatly discontented at the dissipated conduct and extravagance, of a man with whom he is, soon, to be so nearly connected.

For some time, the scene was truly ridiculous; the agitation of the parties concerned, and the bets that were laid upon the old women, were absurd beyond measure. *Who are you for?* and *whose side are*

you

you of? was echoed from mouth to mouth by the whole company. Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley were both ſo exceſſively gay and noiſy, that I ſoon found they had been too free in drinking to their ſucceſs. They handed, with loud ſhouts, the old women to the race-ground, and encouraged them, by liberal promiſes, to exert themſelves.

When the ſignal was given for them to ſet off, the poor creatures, feeble and frightened, ran againſt each other, and neither of them able to ſupport the ſhock, they both fell on the ground.

Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley flew to their aſſiſtance. Seats were brought for them, and they each drank a glaſs of wine. They complained of being much bruiſed; for, heavy and helpleſs, they had not been able to ſave themſelves, but fell with their whole weight upon the gravel. However, as they ſeemed equal ſufferers, both parties were too eager to have the affair deferred.

Again, therefore, they ſet off, and hobbled along, nearly even with each other, for ſome time, yet frequently, and to the inexpreſſible diverſion of the company, they ſtumbled and tottered; and the confuſed hallowing of "*Now Coverley!*" "*Now Merton!*" rung from ſide to ſide during the whole affair.

Not long after, a foot of one of the poor women ſlipt, and, with great force, ſhe came again to the ground. Involuntarily, I ſprung forward to aſſiſt her, but Lord Merton, to whom ſhe did not belong, ſtopped me, calling out "No foul play! no foul play!"

Mr. Coverley, then, repeating the ſame words, went himſelf to help her, and inſiſted that the other ſhould ſtop. A debate enſued; but the poor creature was too much hurt to move, and declared her utter inability to make another attempt. Mr. Coverley was quite brutal; he ſwore at her with unmanly rage, and ſeemed ſcarce able to refrain even from ſtriking her.

Lord Merton then, in great rapture, ſaid it was a *hollow thing*; but Mr. Coverley contended that the fall was accidental, and time ſhould be allowed for the woman to recover. However, all the company being againſt him, he was pronounced the loſer.

We then went to the drawing-room, to tea. After which, the evening being remarkably warm, we all walked in the garden. Lord Merton was quite riotous, and Lady Louiſa in high ſpirits; but Mr. Coverley endeavoured in vain to conceal his chagrin.

As Lord Orville was thoughtful, and walked by himſelf, I expected that, as uſual,

uſual, I ſhould paſs unnoticed, and be left to my own meditations; but this was not the caſe; for Lord Merton, entirely off his guard, giddy equally from wine and ſucceſs, was very troubleſome to me; and, regardleſs of the preſence of Lady Louiſa, which, hitherto, has reſtrained him even from common civility, he attached himſelf to me, during the walk, with a freedom of gallantry that put me extremely out of countenance. He paid me the moſt high-flown compliments, and frequently and forcibly ſeized my hand, though I repeatedly, and with undiſſembled anger, drew it back. Lord Orville, I ſaw, watched us with earneſtneſs, and Lady Louiſa's ſmiles were converted into looks of diſdain.

I could not bear to be thus ſituated, and complaining I was tired, I quickened my pace, with intention to return to the houſe; but Lord Merton, haſtily following, caught my hand, and ſaying the *day was his own*, vowed he would not let me go.

"You *muſt*, my Lord," cried I, extremely flurried.

"You are the moſt charming girl in the world," ſaid he, "and never looked better than at this moment."

"My Lord," cried Mrs. Selwyn, ad-

vancing to us, "you don't conſider, that the better Miſs Anville looks, the more ſtriking is the contraſt with your Lordſhip; therefore, for your own ſake, I would adviſe you not to hold her."

"Egad, my Lord," cried Mr. Coverley, "I don't ſee what right you have to the beſt *old*, and the beſt *young* woman too, in the ſame day."

"*Beſt young woman!*" repeated Mr. Lovel; "'pon honour, Jack, you have made a moſt unfortunate ſpeech; however, if Lady Louiſa can pardon you,—and her Ladyſhip is all goodneſs,—I am ſure nobody elſe can, for you have committed an outrageous ſoleciſm in good manners."

"And pray, Sir," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "under what denomination may your own ſpeech paſs?"

Mr. Lovel, turning another way, affected not to hear her: and Mr. Coverley, bowing to Lady Louiſa, ſaid, "Her Ladyſhip is well acquainted with my devotion,—but, egad, I don't know how it is,—I had always an unlucky turn at an epigram, and never could reſiſt a ſmart play upon words in my life."

"Pray, my Lord," cried I, "let go my hand! pray, Mrs. Selwyn, ſpeak for me."

"My Lord," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "in

detaining Miſs Anville any longer, you only loſe time, for we are already as well convinced of your valour and your ſtrength as if you were to hold her an age."

"My Lord," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont, "I muſt beg leave to interfere; I know not if Lady Louiſa can pardon you, but, as this young Lady is at my houſe, I do not chuſe to have her made uneaſy."

"*I* pardon him!" cried Lady Louiſa, "I declare I am monſtrous glad to get rid of him."

"Egad, my Lord," cried Mr. Coverley, "while you are graſping at a ſhadow, you'll loſe a ſubſtance; you'd beſt make your peace while you can."

"Pray, Mr. Coverley, be quiet," ſaid Lady Louiſa, peeviſhly, "for I declare I won't ſpeak to him. Brother," (taking hold of Lord Orville's arm) "will you walk in with me?"

"Would to Heaven," cried I, frightened to ſee how much Lord Merton was in liquor, "that I, too, had a brother!—and then I ſhould not be expoſed to ſuch treatment!"

Lord Orville, inſtantly quitting Lady Louiſa, ſaid, "Will Miſs Anville allow *me* the honour of taking that title?" and then, without waiting for any anſwer, he diſengaged me from Lord Merton, and,

handing me to Lady Louisa, "Let me," added he, "take equal care of *both* my sisters;" and then, desiring her to take hold of one arm, and begging me to make use of the other, we reached the house in a moment. Lord Merton, disordered as he was, attempted not to stop us.

As soon as we entered the house, I withdrew my arm, and courtsied my thanks, for my heart was too full for speech. Lady Louisa, evidently hurt at her brother's condescension, and piqued extremely by Lord Merton's behaviour, silently drew away her's, and biting her lips, with a look of infinite vexation, walked sullenly up the hall.

Lord Orville asked her if she would not go into the parlour?

"No," answered she, haughtily; "I leave you and your new sister together;" and then she walked up stairs.

I was quite confounded at the pride and rudeness of this speech. Lord Orville himself seemed thunderstruck; I turned from him, and went into the parlour; he followed me, saying, "Must I, now, apologise to Miss Anville for the liberty of my interference?—or ought I to apologise that I did not, as I wished, interfere sooner?"

"O my Lord," cried I, with an emotion I could not repress, "it is from you alone

alone I meet with any reſpect,—all others treat me with impertinence or contempt!"

I am ſorry I had not more command of myſelf, as he had reaſon, juſt then, to ſuppoſe I particularly meant his ſiſter; which, I am ſure, muſt very much hurt him.

"Good Heaven," cried he, "that ſo much ſweetneſs and merit can fail to excite the love and admiration ſo juſtly their due! I cannot,—I dare not expreſs to you half the indignation I feel at this moment!"

"I am ſorry, my Lord," ſaid I, more calmly, "to have raiſed it; but yet,—in a ſituation that calls for protection, to meet only with mortifications,—indeed, I am but ill formed to bear them!"

"My *dear* Miſs Anville," cried he, warmly, "allow *me* to be your friend; think of me as if I were indeed your brother, and let me entreat you to accept my beſt ſervices; if there is any thing in which I can be ſo happy as to ſhew my regard,—my reſpect for you!"

Before I had time to ſpeak, the reſt of the party entered the parlour, and, as I did not wiſh to ſee any thing more of Lord Merton, at leaſt before he had ſlept, I determined to leave it. Lord Orville, ſeeing my deſign, ſaid, as I paſſed him, "Will you go?" "Had not I beſt, my Lord?" ſaid I. "I am afraid," ſaid he, ſmiling,

"ſince

"ſince I muſt now ſpeak as your *brother*, I am afraid you *had*;—you ſee you may truſt me, ſince I can adviſe againſt my own intereſt."

I then left the room, and have been writing ever ſince. And methinks I can never lament the rudeneſs of Lord Merton, as it has more than ever confirmed to me the eſteem of Lord Orville.

LETTER VIII.

Evelina in continuation.

Sept. 30.

OH Sir, what a ſtrange incident have I to recite! what a field of conjecture to open!

Yeſterday evening, we all went to an aſſembly. Lord Orville preſented tickets to the whole family, and did me the honour, to the no ſmall ſurpriſe of all here, I believe, to dance with me. But every day abounds in freſh inſtances of his condeſcending politeneſs, and he now takes every opportunity of calling me his *friend*, and his *ſiſter*.

Lord Merton offered a ticket to Lady Louiſa; but ſhe was ſo much incenſed againſt

againſt him, that ſhe refuſed it with the utmoſt diſdain; neither could he prevail upon her to dance with him; ſhe ſat ſtill the whole evening, and deigned not to look at, or ſpeak to him. To me, her behaviour is almoſt the ſame, for ſhe is cold, diſtant, and haughty, and her eyes expreſs the greateſt contempt. But for Lord Orville, how miſerable would my reſidence here make me!

We were joined, in the ball-room, by Mr. Coverley, Mr. Lovel, and Lord Merton, who looked as if he was doing penance, and ſat all the evening next to Lady Louiſa, vainly endeavouring to appeaſe her anger.

Lord Orville began the minuets; he danced with a young Lady who ſeemed to engage the general attention, as ſhe had not been ſeen here before. She is pretty, and looks mild and good-humoured.

"Pray, Mr. Lovel," ſaid Lady Louiſa, "who is that?"

"Miſs Belmont," anſwered he, "the young heireſs; ſhe came to the Wells yeſterday."

Struck with the name, I involuntarily repeated it, but nobody heard me.

"What is her family?" ſaid Mrs. Beaumont.

"Have you not heard of her, Ma'am?" cried

cried he, "she is only daughter and heiress of Sir John Belmont."

Good Heaven, how did I start! the name struck my ear like a thunder-bolt. Mrs. Selwyn, who immediately looked at me, said, "Be calm, my dear, and we will learn the truth of all this."

Till then, I had never imagined her to be acquainted with my story; but she has since told me, that she knew my unhappy mother, and was well informed of the whole affair.

She asked Mr. Lovel a multitude of questions, and I gathered from his answers, that this young Lady was just come from abroad, with Sir John Belmont, who was now in London; that she was under the care of his sister, Mrs. Paterson; and that she would inherit a considerable estate.

I cannot express the strange feelings with which I was agitated during this recital. What, my dearest Sir, can it possibly mean? Did you ever hear of any after-marriage?—or must I suppose, that, while the lawful child is rejected, another is adopted?—I know not what to think! I am bewildered with a contrariety of ideas!

When we came home, Mrs. Selwyn passed more than an hour in my room, conversing upon this subject. She says that I ought instantly to go to town, find out my father,

and

and have the affair cleared up. She aſſures me I have too ſtrong a reſemblance to my dear, though unknown mother, to allow of the leaſt heſitation in my being owned, when once I am ſeen. For my part, I have no wiſh but to act by your direction.

I cannot give any account of the evening; ſo diſturbed, ſo occupied am I by this ſubject, that I can think of no other. I have entreated Mrs. Selwyn to obſerve the ſtricteſt ſecrecy, and ſhe has promiſed that ſhe will. Indeed, ſhe has too much ſenſe to be idly communicative.

Lord Orville took notice of my being abſent and ſilent, but I ventured not to entruſt him with the cauſe. Fortunately, he was not of the party at the time Mr. Lovel made the diſcovery.

Mrs. Selwyn ſays, that if you approve my going to town, ſhe will herſelf accompany me. I had a thouſand times rather aſk the protection of Mrs. Mirvan, but, after this offer, that will not be poſſible.

Adieu, my deareſt Sir. I am ſure you will write immediately, and I ſhall be all impatience till your letter arrives.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Evelina in continuation.

Oct. 1st.

GOOD God, my dear Sir, what a wonderful tale have I again to relate! even yet, I am not recovered from my extreme ſurpriſe.

Yeſterday morning, as ſoon as I had finiſhed my haſty letter, I was ſummoned to attend a walking party to the Hotwells. It conſiſted only of Mrs. Selwyn and Lord Orville. The latter walked by my ſide all the way, and his converſation diſſipated my uneaſineſs, and inſenſibly reſtored my ſerenity.

At the pump-room, I ſaw Mr. Macartney; I courtſied to him twice ere he would ſpeak to me. When he did, I began to apologiſe for having diſappointed him; but I did not find it very eaſy to excuſe myſelf, as Lord Orville's eyes, with an expreſſion of anxiety that diſtreſſed me, turned from him to me, and me to him, every word I ſpoke. Convinced, however, that I had really trifled with Mr. Macartney, I ſcrupled not to beg his pardon. He was then,

then, not merely appeaſed, but even grateful.

He requeſted me to ſee him to-morrow: but I had not the folly to be again guilty of an indiſcretion which had, already, cauſed me ſo much uneaſineſs; and therefore, I told him, frankly, that it was not in my power, at preſent, to ſee him, but by accident; and, to prevent his being offended, I hinted to him the reaſon I could not receive him as I wiſhed to do.

When I had ſatisfied both him and myſelf upon this ſubject, I turned to Lord Orville, and ſaw, with concern, the gravity of his countenance. I would have ſpoken to him, but knew not how; I believe, however, he read my thoughts, for, in a little time, with a ſort of ſerious ſmile, he ſaid, "Does not Mr. Macartney complain of his diſappointment?"

"Not much, my Lord."

"And how have you appeaſed him?" Finding I heſitated what to anſwer, "Am I not your brother," continued he, "and muſt I not enquire into your affairs?"

"Certainly, my Lord," ſaid I, laughing, "I only wiſh it were better worth your Lordſhip's while."

"Let me, then, make immediate uſe of my privilege. When ſhall you ſee Mr. Macartney again?"

"Indeed,

"Indeed, my Lord, I can't tell."

"But,—do you know that I ſhall not ſuffer *my ſiſter* to make a private appointment?"

"Pray, my Lord," cried I, earneſtly, "uſe that word no more! Indeed you ſhock me extremely."

"That would I not do for the world," cried he; "yet you know not how warmly, how deeply I am intereſted, not only in all your concerns, but in all your actions."

This ſpeech,—the moſt particular one Lord Orville had ever made to me, ended our converſation at that time; for I was too much ſtruck by it to make any anſwer.

Soon after, Mr. Macartney, in a low voice, entreated me not to deny him the gratification of returning the money. While he was ſpeaking, the young Lady I ſaw yeſterday at the aſſembly, with the large party, entered the pump-room. Mr. Macartney turned as pale as death, his voice faltered, and he ſeemed not to know what he ſaid. I was myſelf almoſt equally diſturbed, by the croud of confuſed ideas that occurred to me. Good Heaven, thought I, why ſhould he be thus agitated?—is it poſſible this can be the young Lady he loved?—

In a few minutes, we quitted the pump-room, and though I twice wiſhed Mr. Macartney

cartney good morning, he was ſo abſent he did not hear me.

We did not immediately return to Cliſton, as Mrs. Selwyn had buſineſs at a pamphlet-ſhop. While ſhe was looking at ſome new poems, Lord Orville again aſked me when I ſhould ſee Mr. Macartney?

"Indeed, my Lord," cried I, "I know not, but I would give the univerſe for a few moments converſation with him!" I ſpoke this with a ſimple ſincerity, and was not aware of the force of my own words.

"The univerſe!" repeated he, "Good God, Miſs Anville, do you ſay this to *me?*"

"I would ſay it," returned I, "to any body, my Lord."

"I beg your pardon," ſaid he, in a voice that ſhewed him ill pleaſed, "I am anſwered!"

"My Lord," cried I, "you muſt not judge hardly of me. I ſpoke inadvertently; but if you knew the painful ſuſpenſe I ſuffer at this moment, you would not be ſurpriſed at what I have ſaid."

"And would a meeting with Mr. Macartney relieve you from that ſuſpenſe?"

"Yes, my Lord, two words might be ſufficient."

"Would to Heaven," cried he, after a ſhort

ſhort pauſe, "that I were worthy to know their import!"

"Worthy, my Lord!—O, if that were all, your Lordſhip could aſk nothing I ſhould not be ready to anſwer! If I were but at liberty to ſpeak, I ſhould be *proud* of your Lordſhip's enquiries; but indeed I am not, I have not any right to communicate the affairs of Mr. Macartney,—your Lordſhip cannot ſuppoſe I have."

"I will own to you," anſwered he, "I know not *what* to ſuppoſe; yet there ſeems a frankneſs even in your myſtery,—and ſuch an air of openneſs in your countenance, that I am willing to hope—" He ſtopped a moment, and then added, "This meeting, you ſay, is eſſential to your repoſe?"

"I did not ſay *that*, my Lord; but yet I have the moſt important reaſons for wiſhing to ſpeak to him."

He pauſed a few minutes, and then ſaid, with warmth, "Yes, you *ſhall* ſpeak to him!—I will myſelf aſſiſt you!—Miſs Anville, I am ſure, cannot form a wiſh againſt propriety, I will aſk no queſtions, I will rely upon her own purity, and uninformed, blindfold as I am, I will ſerve her with all my power!" And then he went into the ſhop, leaving me ſo ſtrangely affected by his

his generous behaviour, that I almoſt wiſhed to follow him with my thanks.

When Mrs. Selwyn had tranſacted her affairs, we returned home.

The moment dinner was over, Lord Orville went out, and did not come back till juſt as we were ſummoned to ſupper. This is the longeſt time he has ſpent from the houſe ſince I have been at Clifton, and you cannot imagine, my dear Sir, how much I miſſed him. I ſcarce knew before how infinitely I am indebted to him alone for the happineſs I have enjoyed ſince I have been at Mrs. Beaumont's.

As I generally go down ſtairs laſt, he came to me the moment the ladies had paſſed by, and ſaid, "Shall you be at home to-morrow morning?"

"I believe ſo, my Lord."

"And will you, then, receive a viſitor for me?"

"For you, my Lord!"

"Yes;—I have made acquaintance with Mr. Macartney, and he has promiſed to call upon me to-morrow about three o'clock."

And then, taking my hand, he led me down ſtairs.

O Sir!—was there ever ſuch another man as Lord Orville?—Yes, *one* other now reſides at Berry Hill!

This

This morning there has been a great deal of company here, but at the time appointed by Lord Orville, doubtleſs with that conſideration, the parlour is almoſt always empty, as every body is dreſſing.

Mrs. Beaumont, however, was not gone up ſtairs, when Mr. Macartney ſent in his name.

Lord Orville immediately ſaid, "Beg the favour of him to walk in. You ſee, Madam, that I conſider myſelf as at home."

"I hope ſo," anſwered Mrs. Beaumont, "or I ſhould be very uneaſy."

Mr. Macartney then entered. I believe we both felt very conſcious to whom the viſit was paid: but Lord Orville received him as his own gueſt, and not merely entertained him as ſuch while Mrs. Beaumont remained in the room, but for ſome time after ſhe had left it: a delicacy that ſaved me from the embarraſſment I ſhould have felt, had he immediately quitted us.

In a few minutes, however, he gave Mr. Macartney a book,—for I, too, by way of pretence for continuing in the room, pretended to be reading,—and begged he would be ſo good as to look it over, while he anſwered a note, which he would diſpatch in a few minutes, and return to him.

When he was gone, we both parted with our books, and Mr. Macartney, again producing the paper with the money, beſought me to accept it.

"Pray," ſaid I, ſtill declining it, "did you know the young lady who came into the pump-room yeſterday morning?"

"Know her!" repeated he, changing colour, "Oh, but too well!"

"Indeed!"

"Why, Madam, do you aſk?"

"I muſt beſeech you to ſatisfy me further upon this ſubject; pray tell me who ſhe is."

"Inviolably as I meant to keep my ſecret, I can refuſe you, Madam, nothing; —that lady—is the daughter of Sir John Belmont!—of my father!"

"Gracious Heaven!" cried I, involuntarily laying my hand on his arm, "you are then—" *my brother*, I would have ſaid, but my voice failed me, and I burſt into tears.

"Oh, Madam," cried he, "what does this mean?—What can thus diſtreſs you?"

I could not anſwer, but held out my hand to him. He ſeemed greatly ſurpriſed, and talked in high terms of my condeſcenſion.

"Spare yourſelf," cried I, wiping my eyes, "ſpare yourſelf this miſtake,—you

have a *right* to all I can do for you; the ſimilarity of our circumſtances—"

We were then interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Selwyn; and Mr. Macartney, finding no probability of our being left alone, was obliged to take leave, though, I believe, very reluctantly, while in ſuch ſuſpence.

Mrs. Selwyn then, by dint of interrogatories, drew from me the ſtate of this affair. She is ſo penetrating, that there is no poſſibility of evading to give her ſatisfaction.

Is not this a ſtrange event? Good Heaven, how little did I think that the viſits I ſo unwillingly paid at Mrs. Branghton's would have introduced me to ſo neat a relation! I will never again regret the time I ſpent in town this ſummer: a circumſtance ſo fortunate will always make me think of it with pleaſure.

* * * *

I have juſt received your letter,—and it has almoſt broken my heart!—Oh, Sir! the illuſion is over indeed!—How vainly have I flattered, how miſerably deceived myſelf! Long ſince, doubtful of the ſituation of my heart, I dreaded a ſcrutiny,—

but

but now, now that I have so long escaped, I began, indeed, to think my safety insured, to hope that my fears were causeless, and to believe that my good opinion and esteem of Lord Orville might be owned without suspicion, and felt without danger!—miserably deceived, indeed!

His sight is baneful to my repose,—his society is death to my future tranquillity!—Oh, Lord Orville! could I have believed that a friendship so grateful to my heart, so soothing to my distresses,—a friendship which, in every respect, did me so much honour, would only serve to embitter all my future moments!—What a strange, what an unhappy circumstance, that my gratitude, though so justly excited, should be so fatal to my peace!

Yes, Sir, I *will* quit him,—would to Heaven I could at this moment! without seeing him again,—without trusting to my now conscious emotion!—Oh, Lord Orville, how little do you know the evils I owe to you! how little suppose that, when most dignified by your attention, I was most to be pitied,—and when most exalted by your notice, your were most my enemy!

You, Sir, relied upon my ignorance;—alas, upon your experience; and, when-

ever I doubted the weakneſs of my heart, the idea that *you* did not ſuſpect it, reaſſured me,—reſtored my courage, and confirmed my error!—Yet am I moſt ſenſible of the kindneſs of your ſilence.

Oh, Sir! why have I ever quitted you! why been expoſed to dangers to which I am ſo unequal?

But I will leave this place,—leave Lord Orville,—leave him, perhaps, for ever!—no matter; your counſel, your goodneſs, may teach me how to recover the peace and the ſerenity of which my unguarded folly has beguiled me. To you alone do I truſt,—in you alone confide for every future hope I may form.

The more I conſider of parting with Lord Orville, the leſs fortitude do I feel to bear the ſeparation;—the friendſhip he has ſhewn me,—his politeneſs,—his ſweetneſs of manners,—his concern in my affairs,—his ſolicitude to oblige me,—all, all to be given up!—

No, I cannot tell him I am going,—I dare not truſt myſelf to take leave of him,—I will run away without ſeeing him:—implicitly will I follow your advice, avoid his ſight, and ſhun his ſociety.

To-morrow morning I will ſet off for Barry Hill. Mrs. Selwyn and Mrs. Beaumont

mont ſhall alone know my intention. And to-day,—I will ſpend in my own room. The readineſs of my obedience is the only atonement I can offer, for the weakneſs which calls for its exertion.

Can you, will you, moſt honoured, moſt dear Sir! ſole prop by which the poor Evelina is ſupported,—can you, without reproach, without diſpleaſure, receive the child you have ſo carefully reared,—from whoſe education better fruit might have been expected, and who, bluſhing for her unworthineſs, fears to meet the eye by which ſhe has been cheriſhed?—Oh yes, I am ſure you will! Your Evelina's errors are thoſe of the judgment,—and you, I well know, pardon all but thoſe of the heart!

LETTER X.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, October 1ſt.

I Have only time, my deareſt Sir, for three words, to overtake my laſt letter, and prevent your expecting me immediately; for, when I communicated my intention

tion to Mrs. Selwyn, ſhe would not hear of it, and declared it would be highly ridiculous for me to go before I received an anſwer to my intelligence concerning the journey from Paris. She has, therefore, inſiſted upon my waiting till your next letter arrives. I hope you will not be diſpleaſed at my compliance, though it is rather againſt my own judgment; but Mrs. Selwyn quite overpowered me with the force of her arguments. I will, however, ſee very little of Lord Orville; I will never come down ſtairs before breakfaſt; give up all my walks in the garden,—ſeat myſelf next to Mrs. Selwyn, and not merely avoid his converſation, but ſhun his preſence. I will exert all the prudence, and all the reſolution in my power, to prevent this ſhort delay from giving you any further uneaſineſs.

Adieu, my deareſt Sir. I ſhall not now leave Clifton till I have your directions.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

Evelina in continuation.

October 2d.

YESTERDAY, from the time I received your kind, though heart-piercing letter, I kept my room,—for I was equally unable and unwilling to see Lord Orville: but this morning, finding I seemed destined to pass a few days longer here, I endeavoured to calm my spirits, and to appear as usual; though I determined to avoid him to the utmost of my power. Indeed, as I entered the parlour, when called to breakfast, my thoughts were so much occupied with your letter, that I felt as much confusion at his sight, as if he had himself been informed of its contents.

Mrs. Beaumont made me a slight compliment upon my recovery, for I had pleaded illness to excuse keeping my room: Lady Louisa spoke not a word: but Lord Orville, little imagining himself the cause of my indisposition, enquired concerning my health with the most distinguishing politeness. I hardly made any answer, and, for the first time since I have been here, contrived to sit at some distance from him.

I could not help obſerving that my reſerve ſurpriſed him; yet he perſiſted in his civilities, and ſeemed to wiſh to remove it. But I paid him very little attention; and the moment breakfaſt was over, inſtead of taking a book, or walking in the garden, I retired to my own room.

Soon after, Mrs. Selwyn came to tell me that Lord Orville had been propoſing I ſhould take an airing, and perſuading her to let him drive us both in his phaeton. She delivered the meſſage with an archneſs that made me bluſh; and added, that an airing, in *my Lord Orville's carriage*, could not fail to revive my ſpirits. There is no poſſibility of eſcaping her diſcernment; ſhe has frequently rallied me upon his Lordſhip's attention,—and, alas!—upon the pleaſure with which I have received it! However, I abſolutely refuſed the offer.

"Well," ſaid ſhe, laughing, "I cannot juſt now indulge you with any ſolicitation; for, to tell you the truth, I have buſineſs to tranſact at the Wells, and am glad to be excuſed myſelf. I would aſk you to walk with *me*,—but, ſince *Lord Orville* is refuſed, *I* have not the preſumption to hope for ſucceſs."

"Indeed," cried I, "you are miſtaken; I will attend you with pleaſure."

"O rare coquetry!" cried ſhe, "ſurely it

it muſt be inherent in our ſex, or it could not have been imbibed at Berry Hill."

I had not ſpirits to anſwer her, and therefore put on my hat and cloak in ſilence.

"I preſume," continued ſhe, drily, "his Lordſhip may walk with us?"

"If ſo, Madam," ſaid I, "you will have a companion, and I will ſtay at home."

"My dear child," cried ſhe, "did you bring the certificate of your birth with you?"

"Dear Madam, no!"

"Why then, we ſhall never be known again at Berry Hill."

I felt too conſcious to enjoy her pleaſantry; but I believe ſhe was determined to torment me; for ſhe aſked if ſhe ſhould inform Lord Orville that I deſired him not to be of the party?

"By no means, Madam;—but, indeed, I had rather not walk myſelf."

"My dear," cried ſhe, "I really do not know you this morning,—you have certainly been taking a leſſon of Lady Louiſa."

She then went down ſtairs; but preſently returning, told me ſhe had acquainted Lord Orville that I did not chooſe to go out in the phaeton, but preferred a walk, *tête-a-tête* with her, by way of *variety*.

I said nothing, but was really vexed. She bid me go down ſtairs, and ſaid ſhe would follow immediately.

Lord Orville met me in the hall. "I fear," ſaid he, "Miſs Anville is not yet quite well?" and he would have taken my hand, but I turned from him, and courtſying ſlightly, went into the parlour.

Mrs. Beaumont and Lady Louiſa were at work: Lord Merton was talking with the latter; for he has now made his peace, and is again received into favour.

I ſeated myſelf, as uſual, by the window. Lord Orville, in a few minutes, came to me, and ſaid, "Why is Miſs Anville ſo grave?"

"Not grave, my Lord," ſaid I, "only ſtupid;" and I took up a book.

"You will go," ſaid he, after a ſhort pauſe, "to the aſſembly to-night?"

"No, my Lord, certainly not."

"Neither then will I; for I ſhould be ſorry to ſully the remembrance I have of the happineſs I enjoyed at the laſt."

Mrs. Selwyn then coming in, general enquiries were made, to all but me, of who would go to the aſſembly. Lord Orville inſtantly declared he had letters to write at home; but every one elſe ſettled to go.

I then haſtened Mrs. Selwyn away, though not before ſhe had ſaid to Lord Orville, "Pray, has your Lordſhip obtained Miſs Anville's leave to favour us with your company?"

"I have not, Madam," anſwered he, "had the vanity to aſk it."

During our walk, Mrs. Selwyn tormented me unmercifully. She told me, that ſince I declined any addition to our party, I muſt, doubtleſs, be conſcious of my own powers of entertainment; and begged me, therefore, to exert them freely. I repented a thouſand times having conſented to walk alone with her: for though I made the moſt painful efforts to appear in ſpirits, her raillery quite overpowered me.

We went firſt to the pump-room. It was full of company; and the moment we entered, I heard a murmuring of, "*That's ſhe!*" and, to my great confuſion, I ſaw every eye turned towards me. I pulled my hat over my face, and, by the aſſiſtance of Mrs. Selwyn, endeavoured to ſcreen myſelf from obſervation: nevertheleſs, I found I was ſo much the object of general attention, that I entreated her to haſten away. But unfortunately, ſhe had entered into converſation, very earneſtly, with a gentleman of her acquaintance, and would not liſten to me, but ſaid,

that if I was tired of waiting, I might walk on to the milliner's with the Miſs Watkins, two young ladies I had ſeen at Mrs. Beaumont's, who were going thither.

I accepted the offer very readily, and away we went. But we had not gone three yards, before we were followed by a party of young men, who took every poſſible opportunity of looking at us, and, as they walked behind, talked aloud, in a manner at once unintelligible and abſurd. "Yes," cried one, "'tis certainly ſhe!—mark but her *bluſhing cheek!*"

"And then her *eye*—her *downcaſt eye!*—cried another.

"True, oh moſt true," ſaid a third, "*every beauty is her own!*"

"But then," ſaid the firſt, "her *mind*,—now the difficulty is, to find out the truth of *that*, for ſhe will not ſay a word."

"She is *timid*," anſwered another; "mark but her *timid air*."

During this converſation, we walked on ſilent and quick; as we knew not to whom it was particularly addreſſed, we were all equally aſhamed, and equally deſirous to avoid ſuch unaccountable obſervations.

Soon after, we were caught in a ſhower of rain. We hurried on, and theſe gentlemen,

men, following us, offered their ſervices in the moſt preſſing manner, begging us to make uſe of their arms; and while I almoſt ran, in order to avoid their impertinence, I was ſuddenly met by Sir Clement Willoughby!

We both ſtarted; "Good God," he exclaimed, "Miſs Anville!" and then, regarding my tormentors with an air of diſpleaſure, he earneſtly enquired, if any thing had alarmed me?

"No, no;" cried I, for I found no difficulty, now, to diſengage myſelf from theſe youths, who, probably, concluding from the commanding air of Sir Clement, that he had a right to protect me, quietly gave way to him, and entirely quitted us.

With his uſual impetuoſity, he then began a thouſand enquiries, accompanied with as many compliments; and he told me, that he arrived at Briſtol but this morning, which he had entirely devoted to endeavours to diſcover where I lodged.

"Did you know, then," ſaid I, "that I was at Briſtol?"

"Would to Heaven," cried he, "that I *could* remain in ignorance of your proceedings with the ſame contentment you do of mine! then ſhould I not for ever journey upon the wings of hope, to meet my own

own deſpair! *You* cannot even judge of the cruelty of my fate, for the eaſe and ſerenity of your mind incapacitates you from feeling for the agitation of mine!"

The eaſe and ſerenity of *my* mind! alas, how little do I merit thoſe words!

"But," added he, "had *accident* brought me hither, had I not known of your journey, the voice of fame would have proclaimed it to me inſtantly upon my arrival."

"The voice of fame!" repeated I.

"Yes, for your's was the firſt name I heard at the pump-room. But had I *not* heard your name, ſuch a deſcription could have painted no one elſe."

"Indeed," ſaid I, "I do not underſtand you." But, juſt then arriving at the milliner's, our converſation ended; for Miſs Watkins called me to look at caps and ribbons.

Sir Clement, however, has the art of being always *at home*; he was very ſoon engaged, as buſily as ourſelves, in looking at lace ruffles. Yet he took an opportunity of ſaying to me in a low voice, "How charmed I am to ſee you look ſo well! I was told you were ill,—but I never ſaw you in better health,—never more infinitely lovely!"

I turned

I turned away, to examine the ribbons, and ſoon after Mrs. Selwyn made her appearance. I found that ſhe was acquainted with Sir Clement, and her manner of ſpeaking to him, convinced me that he was a favourite with her.

When their mutual compliments were over, ſhe turned to me, and ſaid, "Pray, Miſs Anville, how long can you live without nouriſhment?"

"Indeed, Ma'am," ſaid I, laughing, "I have never tried."

"Becauſe ſo long, and no longer," anſwered ſhe, "you may remain at Briſtol."

"Why, what is the matter, Ma'am?"

"The matter!—why, all the ladies are at open war with you,—the whole pump-room is in confuſion; and you, innocent as you pretend to look, are the cauſe. However, if you take my advice, you will be very careful how you eat and drink during your ſtay."

I begged her to explain herſelf: and ſhe then told me, that a copy of verſes had been dropt in the pump-room, and read there aloud: "The Beauties of the Wells," ſaid ſhe, "are all mentioned, but *you* are the Venus to whom the prize is given."

"Is it then poſſible," cried Sir Clement, "that you have not ſeen theſe verſes?"

"I hardly

"I hardly know," answered I, "whether *any* body has."

"I assure you," said Mrs. Selwyn, "if you give *me* the invention of them, you do me an honour I by no means deserve."

"I wrote down in my tablets," said Sir Clement, "the stanzas which concern Miss Anville, this morning at the pump-room; and I will do myself the honour of copying them for her this evening."

"But why the part that concerns *Miss Anville?*" said Mrs. Selwyn; "Did you ever see her before this morning?"

"O yes," answered he, "I have had that happiness frequently at Captain Mirvan's. Too, too frequently!" added he, in a low voice, as Mrs. Selwyn turned to the milliner: and, as soon as she was occupied in examining some trimmings, he came to me, and, almost whether I would or not, entered into conversation with me.

"I have a thousand things," cried he, "to say to you. Pray where are you?"

"With Mrs. Selwyn, Sir."

"Indeed — then, for once, Chance is my friend. And how long have you been here?"

"About three weeks."

"Good Heaven! what an anxious search have I had, to discover your abode, since you so suddenly left town! The termagant

gant Madame Duval refuſed me all intelligence. Oh, Miſs Anville, did you know what I have endured! the ſleepleſs, reſtleſs ſtate of ſuſpence I have been tortured with, you could not, all cruel as you are, you could not have received me with ſuch frigid indifference!"

"*Received* you, Sir!

"Why, is not my viſit to *you*? Do you think I ſhould have made this journey, but for the happineſs of again ſeeing you?"

"Indeed it is poſſible I might,—ſince ſo many others do."

"Cruel, cruel girl! you *know* that I adore you! you *know* you are the miſtreſs of my ſoul, and arbitreſs of my fate!"

Mrs. Selwyn then advancing to us, he aſſumed a more diſengaged air, and aſked if he ſhould not have the pleaſure of ſeeing her, in the evening, at the aſſembly?

"Oh yes," cried ſhe, "we ſhall certainly be there; ſo you may bring the verſes with you, if Miſs Anville can wait for them ſo long."

"I hope, then," returned he, "that you will do me the honour to dance with me?"

I thanked him, but ſaid I ſhould not be at the aſſembly.

"Not be at the aſſembly!" cried Mrs. Selwyn,

Selwyn, "Why, have *you*, too, letters to write?"

She looked at me with a ſignificant archneſs that made me colour; and I haſtily anſwered, "No, indeed, Ma'am!"

"You have not!" cried ſhe, yet more drily, "then pray, my dear, do you ſtay at home to *help*,—or to *hinder* others?"

"To do neither, Ma'am," anſwered I, in much confuſion; "ſo, if you pleaſe, I will *not* ſtay at home."

"You allow me, then," ſaid Sir Clement, "to hope for the honour of your hand?"

I only bowed,—for the dread of Mrs. Selwyn's raillery made me not dare refuſe him.

Soon after this we walked home; Sir Clement accompanied us, and the converſation that paſſed between Mrs. Selwyn and him was ſupported in ſo lively a manner that I ſhould have been much entertained, had my mind been more at eaſe! but alas! I could think of nothing but the capricious, the unmeaning appearance which the alteration in my conduct muſt make in the eyes of Lord Orville! And, much as I wiſh to avoid him, greatly as I deſire to ſave myſelf from having my weakneſs known to him,—yet I cannot endure to incur his ill opinion,—and, unacquainted as he

he is with the reaſons by which I am actuated, how can he fail contemning a change to him ſo unaccountable?

As we entered the garden, he was the firſt object we ſaw. He advanced to meet us, and I could not help obſerving, that at ſight of each other both he and Sir Clement changed colour.

We went into the parlour, where we found the ſame party we had left. Mrs. Selwyn preſented Sir Clement to Mrs. Beaumont; Lady Louiſa and Lord Merton he ſeemed well acquainted with already.

The converſation was upon the general ſubjects, of the weather, the company at the Wells, and the news of the day. But Sir Clement, drawing his chair next to mine, took every opportunity of addreſſing himſelf to me in particular.

I could not but remark the ſtriking difference of *his* attention, and that of Lord Orville: the latter has ſuch gentleneſs of manners, ſuch delicacy of conduct, and an air ſo reſpectful, that, when he flatters moſt, he never diſtreſſes, and when he moſt confers honour, appears to receive it! The former *obtrudes* his attention, and *forces* mine; it is ſo pointed, that it always confuſes me, and ſo public, that it attracts general notice. Indeed I have ſometimes thought that he would rather *wiſh*, than diſlike

like to have his partiality for me known, as he takes great care to prevent my being ſpoken to by any body but himſelf.

When, at length, he went away, Lord Orville took his ſeat, and ſaid with a half-ſmile, "Shall *I* call Sir Clement,—or will *you* call me an uſurper, for taking this place?—You make me no anſwer?—Muſt I then ſuppoſe that Sir Clement—"

"It is little worth your Lordſhip's while," ſaid I, "to ſuppoſe any thing upon ſo inſignificant an occaſion."

"Pardon me," cried he,—"to *me* nothing is inſignificant in which you are concerned."

To this I made no anſwer, neither did he ſay any thing more, till the ladies retired to dreſs; and then, when I would have followed them, he ſtopped me, ſaying, "One moment, I entreat you!"

I turned back, and he went on, "I greatly fear that I have been ſo unfortunate as to offend you; yet ſo repugnant to my very ſoul is the idea, that I know not how to ſuppoſe it poſſible I can unwittingly have done the thing in the world that, deſignedly, I would moſt wiſh to avoid."

"No, indeed, my Lord, you have not." ſaid I.

"You ſigh!" cried he, taking my hand,

hand, "would to Heaven I were the ſharer of your uneaſineſs whenceſoever it ſprings! with what earneſtneſs would I not ſtruggle to alleviate it!—Tell me, my dear Miſs Anville,—my new-adopted ſiſter, my ſweet and moſt amiable friend!—tell me, I beſeech you, if I can afford you any aſſiſtance?"

"None, none, my Lord!" cried I, withdrawing my hand, and moving towards the door.

"Is it then impoſſible I can ſerve you?—perhaps you wiſh to ſee Mr. Macartney again?"

"No, my Lord." And I held the door open.

"I am not, I own, ſorry for that. Yet, oh, Miſs Anville, there *is* a queſtion,—there is a conjecture,—I know not how to mention, becauſe I dread the reſult!—But I ſee you are in haſte;—perhaps in the evening I may have the honour of a longer converſation.—Yet one thing will you have the goodneſs to allow me to aſk?—Did you, this morning when you went to the Wells,—did you *know* who you ſhould meet there?"

"Who, my Lord?"

"I beg your pardon a thouſand times for a curioſity ſo unlicenſed,—but I will ſay no more at preſent."

He

He bowed, expecting me to go,—and then, with quick ſteps, but a heavy heart, I came to my own room. His queſtion, I am ſure, meant Sir Clement Willoughby; and, had I not impoſed upon myſelf the ſevere taſk of avoiding, flying Lord Orville with all my power, I would inſtantly have ſatisfied him of my ignorance of Sir Clement's journey. And yet more did I long to ſay ſomething of the aſſembly, ſince I found he depended upon my ſpending the evening at home.

I did not go down ſtairs again till the family was aſſembled to dinner. My dreſs, I ſaw, ſtruck Lord Orville with aſtoniſhment; and I was myſelf ſo much aſhamed of appearing whimſical and unſteady, that I could not look up.

"I underſtood," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont, "that Miſs Anville did not go out this evening?"

"Her intention in the morning," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "was to ſtay at home; but there is a faſcinating power in an *aſſembly*, which, upon ſecond thoughts, is not to be reſiſted."

"The aſſembly!" cried Lord Orville, "are you then going to the aſſembly?"

I made no anſwer; and we all took our places at table.

It was not without difficulty that I contrived

trived to give up my uſual ſeat; but I was determined to adhere to the promiſe in my yeſterday's letter, though I ſaw that Lord Orville ſeemed quite confounded at my viſible endeavours to avoid him.

After dinner, we all went into the drawing-room together, as there were no gentlemen to detain his Lordſhip; and then, before I could place myſelf out of his way, he ſaid, "You are then really going to the aſſembly?——May I aſk if you ſhall dance?"

"I believe not,—my Lord."

"If I did not fear," continued he, "that you would be tired of the ſame partner at two following aſſemblies, I would give up my letter-writing till to-morrow, and ſolicit the honour of your hand."

"If I *do* dance," ſaid I, in great confuſion, "I believe I am engaged."

"Engaged!" cried he, with earneſtneſs, "May I aſk to whom?"

"To—Sir Clement Willoughby, my Lord."

He ſaid nothing, but looked very little pleaſed, and did not addreſs himſelf to me any more all the afternoon. Oh, Sir!—thus ſituated, how comfortleſs were the feelings of your Evelina!

Early in the evening, with his accuſtomed

tomed aſſiduity, Sir Clement came to conduct us to the aſſembly. He ſoon contrived to ſeat himſelf next me, and, in a low voice, paid me ſo many compliments, that I knew not which way to look.

Lord Orville hardly ſpoke a word, and his countenance was grave and thoughtful; yet, whenever I raiſed my eyes, his, I perceived, were directed towards me, though inſtantly, upon meeting mine, he looked another way.

In a ſhort time, Sir Clement, taking from his pocket a folded paper, ſaid, almoſt in a whiſper, "Here, loveliеſt of women, you will ſee a faint, an unſucceſsful attempt to paint the object of all my adoration! yet, weak as are the lines for the purpoſe, I envy beyond expreſſion the happy mortal who has dared make the effort."

"I will look at them," ſaid I, "ſome other time." For, conſcious that I was obſerved by Lord Orville, I could not bear he ſhould ſee me take a written paper, ſo privately offered, from Sir Clement. But Sir Clement is an impracticable man, and I never yet ſucceeded in any attempt to fruſtrate whatever he had planned.

"No," ſaid he, ſtill in a whiſper, "you muſt take them now, while Lady Louiſa is away;" for ſhe and Mrs. Selwyn were gone up

up ſtairs to finiſh their dreſs, "as ſhe muſt by no means ſee them."

"Indeed," ſaid I, "I have no intention to ſhew them."

"But the only way," anſwered he, "to avoid ſuſpicion, is to take them in her abſence. I would have read them aloud myſelf, but that they are not proper to be ſeen by any body in this houſe, yourſelf and Mrs. Selwyn excepted."

Then again he preſented me the paper, which I now was obliged to take, as I found declining it was vain. But I was ſorry that this action ſhould be ſeen, and the whiſpering remarked, though the purport of the converſation was left to conjecture.

As I held it in my hand, Sir Clement teazed me to look at it immediately; and told me, that the reaſon he could not produce the lines publicly, was, that, among the ladies who were mentioned, and ſuppoſed to be rejected, was Lady Louiſa Larpent. I am much concerned at this circumſtance, as I cannot doubt but that it will render me more diſagreeable to her than ever, if ſhe ſhould hear of it.

I will now copy the verſes, which Sir Clement would not let me reſt till I had read.

SEE laſt advance, with baſhful grace,
Downcaſt eye, and bluſhing cheek,
Timid air, and beauteous face,
Anville,—whom the Graces ſeek.

Though ev'ry beauty is her own,
And though her mind each virtue fills,
Anville,—to her power unknown,
Artleſs ſtrikes,—unconſcious kills!

I am ſure, my dear Sir, you will not wonder that a panegyric ſuch as this, ſhould, in reading, give me the greateſt confuſion; and, unfortunately, before I had finiſhed it, the ladies returned.

"What have you there, my dear?" ſaid Mrs. Selwyn.

"Nothing, Ma'am," ſaid I, haſtily folding, and putting it in my pocket.

"And has *nothing*," cried ſhe, "the power of *rouge*?"

I made no anſwer; a deep ſigh which eſcaped Lord Orville at that moment, reached my ears, and gave me ſenſations—which I dare not mention!

Lord Merton then handed Lady Louiſa and Mrs. Beaumont to the latter's carriage. Mrs. Selwyn led the way to Sir Clement's, who handed me in after her.

During the ride, I did not once ſpeak; but when I came to the aſſembly-room, Sir Clement took care that I ſhould not

preſerve my ſilence. He aſked me immediately to dance; I begged him to excuſe me, and ſeek ſome other partner. But on the contrary, he told me he was very glad I would ſit ſtill, as he had a million of things to ſay to me.

He then began to tell me how much he had ſuffered from abſence; how greatly he was alarmed when he heard I had left town, and how cruelly difficult he had found it to trace me; which, at laſt, he could only do by ſacrificing another week to Captain Mirvan.

"And Howard Grove," continued he, "which, at my firſt viſit, I thought the moſt delightful ſpot upon earth, now appeared to be the moſt diſmal: the face of the country ſeemed altered: the walks which I had thought moſt pleaſant, were now moſt ſtupid: Lady Howard, who had appeared a chearful and reſpectable old lady, now ſeemed in the common John Trot ſtyle of other aged dames: Mrs. Mirvan, whom I had eſteemed as an amiable piece of ſtill-life, now became ſo inſipid, that I could hardly keep awake in her company? the daughter too, whom I had regarded as a good-humoured, pretty ſort of girl, now ſeemed too inſignificant for notice: and as to the Captain, I had always

thought him a booby,—but now he appeared a ſavage!"

"Indeed, Sir Clement," cried I, angrily, "I will not hear you talk thus of my beſt friends."

"I beg your pardon," ſaid he, "but the contraſt of my two viſits was too ſtriking, not to be mentioned."

He then aſked what I thought of the verſes?

"Either," ſaid I, "that they are written ironically, or by ſome madman."

Such a profuſion of compliments enſued, that I was obliged to propoſe dancing, in my own defence. When we ſtood up, "I intended," ſaid he, "to have diſcovered the author by his looks; but I find you ſo much the general loadſtone of attention, that my ſuſpicions change their object every moment. Surely you muſt yourſelf have ſome knowledge who he is?"

I told him, no. Yet, my dear Sir, I muſt own to you, I have no doubt but that Mr. Macartney muſt be the author; no one elſe would ſpeak of me ſo partially; and, indeed, his poetical turn puts it, with me, beyond diſpute.

He aſked me a thouſand queſtions concerning Lord Orville; how long he had been at Briſtol?—what time I had ſpent at Clifton?

ton?—whether he rode out every morning?—whether I ever truſted myſelf in a phaeton? and a multitude of other enquiries, all tending to diſcover if I was honoured with much of his Lordſhip's attention, and all made with his uſual freedom and impetuoſity.

Fortunately, as I much wiſhed to retire early, Lady Louiſa makes a point of being among the firſt who quit the rooms, and therefore we got home in very tolerable time.

Lord Orville's reception of us was grave and cold: far from diſtinguiſhing me, as uſual, by particular civilities, Lady Louiſa herſelf could not have ſeen me enter the room with more frigid unconcern, nor have more ſcrupulouſly avoided honouring me with any notice. But chiefly I was ſtruck to ſee, that he ſuffered Sir Clement, who ſtayed ſupper, to ſit between us, without any effort to prevent him, though till then, he had ſeemed to be even tenacious of a ſeat next mine.

This little circumſtance affected me more than I can expreſs: yet I endeavoured to *rejoice* at it, ſince neglect and indifference from him may be my beſt friends.—But, alas!—ſo ſuddenly, ſo abruptly to forfeit his attention!—to loſe his friendſhip!—Oh Sir, theſe thoughts pierced my ſoul!—ſcarce could I keep my ſeat; for not all my efforts

could reſtrain the tears from trickling down my cheeks: however, as Lord Orville ſaw them not, for Sir Clement's head was conſtantly between us, I tried to collect my ſpirits, and ſucceeded ſo far as to keep my place with decency, till Sir Clement took leave: and then, not daring to truſt my eyes to meet thoſe of Lord Orville, I retired.

I have been writing ever ſince; for, certain that I could not ſleep, I would not go to bed. Tell me, my deareſt Sir, if you poſſibly can, tell me that you approve my change of conduct,—tell me that my altered behaviour to Lord Orville is right,—that my flying his ſociety, and avoiding his civilities, are actions which *you* would have dictated.—Tell me this, and the ſacrifices I have made will comfort me in the midſt of my regret,—for never, never can I ceaſe to regret that I have loſt the friendſhip of Lord Orville!—Oh Sir, I have ſlighted, have rejected,—have thrown it away!—No matter, it was an honour I merited not to preſerve, and I now ſee,—that my mind was unequal to ſuſtaining it without danger.

Yet ſo ſtrong is the deſire you have implanted in me to act with uprightneſs and propriety, that, however the weakneſs of my heart may diſtreſs and afflict me, it will never, I humbly truſt, render me wilfully culpable. The wiſh of doing well governs every

other,

other, as far as concerns my conduct,—for am I not *your* child?—the creature of your own forming?—Yet, Oh Sir, friend, parent of my heart!—my feelings are all at war with my duties; and, while I moſt ſtruggle to acquire ſelf-approbation, my peace, my happineſs, my hopes,—are loſt!

'Tis you alone can compoſe a mind ſo cruelly agitated: you, I well know, can feel pity for the weakneſs to which you are a ſtranger; and, though you blame the affliction, ſoothe and comfort the afflicted.

LETTER XII.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, Oct. 5.

YOUR laſt communication, my deareſt child, is indeed aſtoniſhing; that an acknowledged daughter and heireſs of Sir John Belmont ſhould be at Briſtol, and ſtill my Evelina bear the name of Anville, is to me inexplicable: yet the myſtery of the letter to Lady Howard prepared me to expect ſomething extraordinary upon Sir John Belmont's return to England.

Whoever this young lady may be, it is certain ſhe now takes a place to which you

have a right indiſputable. An *after-marriage* I never heard of; yet, ſuppoſing ſuch a one to have happened, Miſs Evelyn was certainly the firſt wife, and therefore her daughter muſt, at leaſt, be entitled to the name of Belmont.

Either there are circumſtances in this affair at preſent utterly incomprehenſible, or elſe ſome ſtrange and moſt atrocious fraud has been practiſed; which of theſe two is the caſe, it now behoves us to enquire.

My reluctance to this ſtep, gives way to my conviction of its propriety, ſince the reputation of your dear and much-injured mother muſt now either be fully cleared from blemiſh, or receive its final and indelible wound.

The public appearance of a daughter of Sir John Belmont will revive the remembrance of Miſs Evelyn's ſtory in all who have heard it,—who the *mother* was, will be univerſally demanded,—and if any other Lady Belmont ſhould be named,—the birth of my Evelina will receive a ſtigma, againſt which honour, truth, and innocence may appeal in vain! a ſtigma which will eternally blaſt the fair fame of her virtuous mother, and caſt upon her blameleſs ſelf the odium of a title, which not all her purity can reſcue from eſtabliſhed ſhame and diſhonour!

No,

No, my dear child, no; I will not quietly ſuffer the aſhes of your mother to be treated with ignominy! Her ſpotleſs character ſhall be juſtified to the world—her marriage ſhall be acknowledged, and her child ſhall bear the name to which ſhe is lawfully entitled.

It is true, that Mrs. Mirvan would conduct this affair with more delicacy than Mrs. Selwyn; yet, perhaps, to ſave time is, of all conſiderations, the moſt important, ſince the longer this myſtery is ſuffered to continue, the more difficult may be rendered its explanation. The ſooner, therefore, you can ſet out for town, the leſs formidable will be your taſk.

Let not your timidity, my dear love, depreſs your ſpirits: I ſhall, indeed, tremble for you at a meeting ſo ſingular, and ſo affecting, yet there can be no doubt of the ſucceſs of your application: I encloſe a letter from your unhappy mother, written, and reſerved purpoſely for this occaſion: Mrs. Clinton, too, who attended her in her laſt illneſs, muſt accompany you to town.—But, without any other certificate of your birth, that which you carry in your countenance, as it could not be effected by artifice, ſo it cannot admit of a doubt.

And now, my Evelina, committed, at length, to the care of your real parent, receive the fervent prayers, wiſhes, and bleſſings, of him who ſo fondly adopted you!

May'ſt thou, oh child of my boſom! may'ſt thou, in this change of ſituation, experience no change of diſpoſition! but receive with humility, and ſupport with meekneſs, the elevation to which thou art riſing! May thy manners, language, and deportment, all evince that modeſt equanimity, and chearful gratitude, which not merely deſerve, but dignify proſperity! May'ſt thou, to the laſt moments of an unblemiſhed life, retain thy genuine ſimplicity, thy ſingleneſs of heart, thy guileleſs ſincerity! And may'ſt thou, ſtranger to oſtentation, and ſuperior to inſolence, with true greatneſs of ſoul, ſhine forth conſpicuous only in beneficence!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

[Incloſed in the preceding Letter.]

Lady Belmont to Sir John Belmont.

IN the firm hope that the moment of anguiſh which approaches will prove the period of my ſufferings, once more I addreſs myſelf to Sir John Belmont, in behalf of the child, who, if it ſurvives its mother, will hereafter be the bearer of this letter.

Yet in what terms,—oh moſt cruel of men!—can the loſt Caroline addreſs you, and not addreſs you in vain? Oh deaf to the voice of compaſſion—deaf to the ſting of truth,—deaf to every tie of honour—ſay, in what terms may the loſt Caroline addreſs you, and not addreſs you in vain?

Shall I call you by the loved, the reſpected title of huſband?—No, you diſclaim it!—the father of my infant?—No, you doom it to infamy!—the lover who reſcued me from a forced marriage?—No, you have yourſelf betrayed me!—the friend from whom I hoped ſuccour and protec-

tion?—No, you have conſigned me to miſery and deſtruction!

Oh hardened againſt every plea of juſtice, remorſe, or pity! how, and in what manner, may I hope to move thee? Is there one method I have left untried? remains there one reſource uneſſayed? No! I have exhauſted all the bitterneſs of reproach, and drained every ſluice of compaſſion!

Hopeleſs, and almoſt deſperate, twenty times have I flung away my pen;—but the feelings of a mother, a mother agonizing for the fate of her child, again animating my courage, as often I have reſumed it.

Perhaps when I am no more, when the meaſure of my woes is compleated, and the ſtill, ſilent, unreproaching duſt has received my ſad remains,—then, perhaps, when accuſation is no longer to be feared, nor detection to be dreaded, the voice of equity, and the cry of nature may be heard.

Liſten, oh Belmont, to their dictates! reprobate not your child, though you have reprobated its mother. The evils that are paſt, perhaps, when too late, you may wiſh to recall; the young creature you have perſecuted, perhaps, when too late, you may regret that you have deſtroyed;—you may think with horror of the deceptions you have

have practiſed, and the pangs of remorſe may follow me to the tomb:—oh Belmont, all my reſentment ſoftens into pity at the thought! what will become of thee, good Heaven, when with the eye of penitence, thou revieweſt thy paſt conduct!

Hear, then, the ſolemn, the laſt addreſs with which the unhappy Caroline will importune thee.

If, when the time of thy contrition arrives,—for arrive it muſt!—when the ſenſe of thy treachery ſhall rob thee of almoſt every other, if then thy tortured heart ſhall ſigh to expiate thy guilt,—mark the conditions upon which I leave thee my forgiveneſs.

Thou know'ſt I am thy wife!—clear, then, to the world the reputation thou haſt ſullied, and receive as thy lawful ſucceſſor the child who will preſent thee this my dying requeſt!

The worthieſt, the moſt benevolent, the beſt of men, to whoſe conſoling kindneſs I owe the little tranquillity I have been able to preſerve, has plighted me his faith that, upon no other conditions, he will part with his helpleſs charge.

Should'ſt thou, in the features of this deſerted innocent, trace the reſemblance of the wretched Caroline,—ſhould its face bear the marks of its birth, and revive in thy memory

memory the image of its mother; wilt thou not, Belmont, wilt thou not therefore renounce it?—Oh babe of my fondeſt affection! for whom already I experience all the tenderneſs of maternal pity!—look not like thy unfortunate mother,—leſt the parent whom the hand of death may ſpare, ſhall be ſnatched from thee by the more cruel means of unnatural antipathy!

I can write no more. The ſmall ſhare of ſerenity I have painfully acquired, will not bear the ſhock of the dreadful ideas that crowd upon me.

Adieu,—for ever!—

Yet oh!—ſhall I not, in this laſt farewell, which thou wilt not read till every ſtormy paſſion is extinct,—and the kind grave has emboſomed all my ſorrows,—ſhall I not offer to the man once ſo dear to me, a ray of conſolation to thoſe afflictions he has in reſerve? Suffer me, then, to tell thee, that my pity far exceeds my indignation,—that I will pray for thee in my laſt moments,—and that the recollection of the love I once bore thee, ſhall ſwallow up every other!

Once more, adieu!

CAROLINE BELMONT.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Clifton, Oct. 3d.

THIS morning I ſaw from my window, that Lord Orville was walking in the garden; but I would not go down ſtairs till breakfaſt was ready: and then, he paid me his compliments almoſt as coldly as Lady Louiſa paid her's.

I took my uſual place, and Mrs. Beaumont, Lady Louiſa, and Mrs. Selwyn, entered into their uſual converſation.—Not ſo your Evelina: diſregarded, ſilent, and melancholy, ſhe ſat like a cypher, whom to nobody belonging, by nobody was noticed.

Ill brooking ſuch a ſituation, and unable to ſupport the neglect of Lord Orville, the moment breakfaſt was over, I left the room; and was going up ſtairs, when, very unpleaſantly, I was ſtopped by Sir Clement Willoughby, who, flying into the hall, prevented my proceeding.

He enquired very particularly after my health, and entreated me to return into the parlour. Unwillingly I conſented, but thought any thing preferable to continuing alone

alone with him; and he would neither leave me, nor ſuffer me to paſs on. Yet, in returning, I felt not a little aſhamed of appearing thus to take the viſit of Sir Clement to myſelf. And, indeed, he endeavoured, by his manner of addreſſing me, to give it that air.

He ſtayed, I believe, an hour; nor would he, perhaps, even then have gone, had not Mrs. Beaumont broken up the party, by propoſing an airing in her coach. Lady Louiſa conſented to accompany her: but Mrs. Selwyn, when applied to, ſaid, "If my Lord, or Sir Clement, will join us, I ſhall be happy to make one; but really a trio of females will be nervous to the laſt degree."

Sir Clement readily agreed to attend them; indeed, he makes it his evident ſtudy to court the favour of Mrs. Beaumont. Lord Orville excuſed himſelf from going out; and I retired to my own room. What he did with himſelf I know not, for I would not go down ſtairs till dinner was ready: his coldneſs, though my own change of behaviour has occaſioned it, ſo cruelly depreſſes my ſpirits, that I know not how to ſupport myſelf in his preſence.

At dinner, I found Sir Clement again of the party. Indeed he manages every thing his own way; for Mrs. Beaumont,

though by no means eaſy to pleaſe, ſeems quite at his diſpoſal.

The dinner, the afternoon, and the evening, were to me the moſt irkſome imaginable: I was tormented by the aſſiduity of Sir Clement, who not only *took*, but *made* opportunities of ſpeaking to me,—and I was hurt,—oh how inexpreſſibly hurt!—that Lord Orville not only forbore, as hitherto, *ſeeking*, he even *neglected* all occaſions of talking with me!

I begin to think, my dear Sir, that the ſudden alteration in my behaviour was ill-judged and improper; for, as I had received no offence, as the cauſe of the change was upon *my* account, not *his*, I ſhould not have aſſumed, ſo abruptly, a reſerve for which I dared aſſign no reaſon,—nor have ſhunned his preſence ſo obviouſly, without conſidering the ſtrange appearance of ſuch a conduct.

Alas, my deareſt Sir, that my reflections ſhould always be too late to ſerve me! dearly, indeed, do I purchaſe experience! and much I fear I ſhall ſuffer yet more ſeverely, from the heedleſs indiſcretion of my temper, ere I attain that prudence and conſideration, which, by foreſeeing diſtant conſequences, may rule and direct in preſent exigencies.

Yeſterday

Oct. 4th.

Yeſterday morning every body rode out, except Mrs. Selwyn and myſelf: and we two ſat for ſome time together in her room; but, as ſoon as I could, I quitted her, to ſaunter in the garden; for ſhe diverts herſelf ſo unmercifully with rallying me, either upon my gravity,—or concerning Lord Orville,—that I dread having any converſation with her.

Here I believe I ſpent an hour by myſelf; when, hearing the garden-gate open, I went into an arbour at the end of a long walk, where, ruminating, very unpleaſantly, upon my future proſpects, I remained quietly ſeated but a few minutes, before I was interrupted by the appearance of Sir Clement Willoughby.

I ſtarted; and would have left the arbour, but he prevented me. Indeed I am almoſt certain he had heard in the houſe where I was, as it is not, otherwiſe, probable he would have ſtrolled down the garden alone.

"Stop, ſtop," cried he, "lovelieſt and moſt beloved of women, ſtop and hear me!"

Then, making me keep my place, he ſat down by me, and would have taken my hand;

hand; but I drew it back, and ſaid I could not ſtay.

"Can you, then," cried he, "refuſe me even the ſmalleſt gratification, though, but yeſterday, I almoſt ſuffered martyrdom for the pleaſure of ſeeing you?"

"Martyrdom! Sir Clement."

"Yes, beauteous inſenſible! *martyrdom:* for did I not compel myſelf to be immured in a carriage, the tedious length of a whole morning, with the three moſt fatiguing women in England?"

"Upon my word, the Ladies are extremely obliged to you."

"O," returned he, "they have, every one of them, ſo copious a ſhare of their own perſonal eſteem, that they have no right to repine at the failure of it in the world; and, indeed, they will themſelves be the laſt to diſcover it."

"How little," cried I, "are thoſe Ladies aware of ſuch ſeverity from *you!*"

"They are guarded," anſwered he, "ſo happily and ſo ſecurely by their own conceit, that they are not aware of it from any body. Oh Miſs Anville, to be torn away from *you*, in order to be ſhut up with *them*, —is there a human being, except your cruel ſelf, could forbear to pity me?"

"I believe, Sir Clement, however hardly you may chooſe to judge of them, your ſituation,

ſituation, by the world in general, would rather have been envied, than pitied."

"The world in general," anſwered he, "has the ſame opinion of them that I have myſelf: Mrs. Beaumont is every where laughed at, Lady Louiſa ridiculed, and Mrs. Selwyn hated."

"Good God, Sir Clement, what cruel ſtrength of words do you uſe!"

"It is you, my angel, are to blame, ſince your perfections have rendered their faults ſo glaring. I proteſt to you, during our whole ride, I thought the carriage drawn by ſnails. The abſurd pride of Mrs. Beaumont, and the reſpect ſhe exacts, are at once inſufferable and ſtupifying; had I never before been in her company, I ſhould have concluded that this had been her firſt airing from the herald's-office,—and wiſhed her nothing worſe than that it might alſo be the laſt. I aſſure you, that but for gaining the freedom of her houſe, I would fly her as I would plague, peſtilence, and famine. Mrs. Selwyn, indeed, afforded ſome relief from this formality, but the unbounded licence of her tongue—"

"O, Sir Clement, do *you* object to that?"

"Yes, my ſweet reproacher, in a *woman*, I do; in a *woman* I think it intolerable. She has wit, I acknowledge, and more

more underſtanding than half her ſex put together; but ſhe keeps alive a perpetual expectation of ſatire, that ſpreads a general uneaſineſs among all who are in her preſence; and ſhe talks ſo much, that even the beſt things ſhe ſays weary the attention. As to the little Louiſa, 'tis ſuch a pretty piece of languor, that 'tis almoſt cruel to ſpeak rationally about her,—elſe I ſhould ſay, ſhe is a mere compound of affectation, impertinence, and airs."

"I am quite amazed," ſaid I, "that, with ſuch opinions, you can behave to them all with ſo much attention and civility."

"Civility! my angel,—why I could worſhip, could adore them, only to procure myſelf a moment of your converſation! Have you not ſeen me pay my court to the groſs Captain Mirvan, and the virago Madame Duval? Were it poſſible that a creature ſo horrid could be formed, as to partake of the worſt qualities of all theſe characters,—a creature who ſhould have the haughtineſs of Mrs. Beaumont, the brutality of Captain Mirvan, the ſelf-conceit of Mrs. Selwyn, the affectation of Lady Louiſa, and the vulgarity of Madame Duval,—even to ſuch a monſter as that, I would pay homage, and pour forth adulation,

tion, only to obtain one word, one look from my adored Miſs Anville!"

"Sir Clement," ſaid I, "you are greatly miſtaken if you ſuppoſe ſuch duplicity of character recommends you to my good opinion. But I muſt take this opportunity of begging you never more to talk to me in this ſtrain."

"Oh Miſs Anville, your reproofs, your coldneſs, pierce me to the ſoul! look upon me with leſs rigour, and make me what you pleaſe;—you ſhall govern and direct all my actions,—you ſhall new-form, new-model me:—I will not have even a wiſh but of your ſuggeſtion; only deign to look upon me with pity,—if not with favour!"

"Suffer me, Sir," ſaid I very gravely, "to make uſe of this occaſion to put a final concluſion to ſuch expreſſions. I entreat you never again to addreſs me in a language ſo flighty, and ſo unwelcome. You have already given me great uneaſineſs; and I muſt frankly aſſure you, that if you do not deſire to baniſh me from wherever you are, you will adopt a very different ſtyle and conduct in future."

I then roſe, and was going, but he flung himſelf at my feet to prevent me, exclaiming, in a moſt paſſionate manner, "Good God!

God! Miſs Anville, what do you ſay?—is it, can it be poſſible, that ſo unmoved, that with ſuch petrifying indifference, you can tear from me even the remoteſt hope!"

"I know not, Sir," ſaid I, endeavouring to diſengage myſelf from him, "what hope you mean, but I am ſure that I never intended to give you any."

"You diſtract me!" cried he, "I cannot endure ſuch ſcorn;—I beſeech you to have ſome moderation in your cruelty, leſt you make me deſperate:—ſay, then, that you pity me,—O faireſt inexorable! loveliest tyrant!—ſay, tell me, at leaſt, that you pity me!"

Juſt then, who ſhould come in ſight, as if intending to paſs by the arbour, but Lord Orville! Good Heaven, how did I ſtart! and he, the moment he ſaw me, turned pale, and was haſtily retiring;—but I called out, "Lord Orville!—Sir Clement, releaſe me,—let go my hand!"

Sir Clement, in ſome confuſion, ſuddenly roſe, but ſtill graſped my hand. Lord Orville, who had turned back, was again walking away; but, ſtill ſtruggling to diſengage myſelf, I called out, "Pray, pray, my Lord, don't go!—Sir Clement, I *inſiſt* upon your releaſing me!"

Lord Orville then, haſtily approaching us,

us, ſaid, with great ſpirit, "Sir Clement, you cannot wiſh to detain Miſs Anville by force!"

"Neither, my Lord," cried Sir Clement, proudly, "do I requeſt the honour of you Lordſhip's interference."

However, he let go my hand, and I immediately ran into the houſe.

I was now frightened to death leſt Sir Clement's mortified pride ſhould provoke him to affront Lord Orville: I therefore ran haſtily to Mrs. Selwyn, and entreated her, in a manner hardly to be underſtood, to walk towards the arbour. She aſked no queſtions, for ſhe is quick as lightning in taking a hint, but inſtantly haſtened into the garden.

Imagine, my dear Sir, how wretched I muſt be till I ſaw her return! ſcarce could I reſtrain myſelf from running back: however, I checked my impatience, and waited, though in agonies, till ſhe came.

And, now, my dear Sir, I have a converſation to write, the moſt intereſting to me, that I ever heard. The comments and queſtions with which Mrs. Selwyn interrupted her account, I ſhall not mention; for they are ſuch as you may very eaſily ſuppoſe.

Lord Orville and Sir Clement were both ſeated very quietly in the arbour: and Mrs.

Mrs. Selwyn, ſtanding ſtill, as ſoon as ſhe was within a few yards of them, heard Sir Clement ſay, "Your queſtion, my Lord, alarms me, and I can by no means anſwer it, unleſs you will allow me to propoſe another?"

"Undoubtedly, Sir."

"You aſk me, my Lord, what are my intentions?—I ſhould be very happy to be ſatisfied as to your Lordſhip's."

"I have never, Sir, profeſſed *any*."

Here they were both, for a few moments, ſilent; and then Sir Clement ſaid, "To what, my Lord, muſt I, then, impute your deſire of knowing mine?"

"To an unaffected intereſt in Miſs Anville's welfare."

"Such an intereſt," ſaid Sir Clement, dryly, "is, indeed, very generous: but, except in a father,—a brother,—or a lover—"

"Sir Clement," interrupted his Lordſhip, "I know your inference; and I acknowledge I have not the right of enquiry which any of thoſe three titles beſtow, and yet I confeſs the warmeſt wiſhes to ſerve her, and to ſee her happy. Will you, then, excuſe me, if I take the liberty to repeat my queſtion?"

"Yes, if your Lordſhip will excuſe my

repeating that I think it a rather extraordinary one."

"It may be ſo," ſaid Lord Orville; "but this young lady ſeems to be peculiarly ſituated; ſhe is very young, very inexperienced, yet appears to be left totally to her own direction. She does not, I believe, ſee the dangers to which ſhe is expoſed, and I will own to you, I feel a ſtrong deſire to point them out."

"I don't rightly underſtand your Lordſhip,—but I think you cannot mean to prejudice her againſt me?"

"Her ſentiments of *you*, Sir, are as much unknown to me as your intentions towards *her*. Perhaps, were I acquainted with either, my officiouſneſs might be at an end: but I preſume not to aſk upon what terms—"

Here he ſtopped; and Sir Clement ſaid, "You know, my Lord, I am not given to deſpair; I am by no means ſuch a puppy as to tell you I am upon *ſure ground*, however, perſeverance—"

"You are, then, determined to perſevere?"

"I am, my Lord."

"Pardon me, then, Sir Clement, if I ſpeak to you with freedom. This young lady, though ſhe ſeems alone, and, in ſome meaſure,

meaſure, unprotected, is not entirely without friends; ſhe has been extremely well educated, and accuſtomed to good company; ſhe has a natural love of virtue, and a mind that might adorn *any* ſtation, however exalted: is ſuch a young lady, Sir Clement, a proper object to trifle with?—for your principles, excuſe me, Sir, are well known."

"As to that, my Lord, let Miſs Anville look to herſelf; ſhe has an excellent underſtanding, and needs no counſellor."

"Her underſtanding is, indeed, excellent; but ſhe is too young for ſuſpicion, and has an artleſſneſs of diſpoſition that I never ſaw equalled."

"My Lord," cried Sir Clement, warmly, "your praiſes make me doubt your diſintereſtedneſs, and there exiſts not the man who I would ſo unwillingly have for a rival as yourſelf. But you muſt give me leave to ſay, you have greatly deceived me in regard to this affair."

"How ſo, Sir?" cried Lord Orville, with equal warmth.

"You were pleaſed, my Lord," anſwered Sir Clement, "upon our firſt converſation concerning this young lady, to ſpeak of her in terms by no means ſuited to your preſent encomiums; you ſaid ſhe was a *poor, weak, ignorant girl*, and I had

great reaſon to believe you had a moſt contemptuous opinion of her."

"It is very true," ſaid Lord Orville, "that I did not, at our firſt acquaintance, do juſtice to the merit of Miſs Anville; but I knew not, then, how new ſhe was to the world; at preſent, however, I am convinced, that whatever might appear ſtrange in her behaviour, was ſimply the effect of inexperience, timidity, and a retired education, for I find her informed, ſenſible, and intelligent. She is not, indeed, like moſt modern young ladies, to be known in half an hour; her modeſt worth, and fearful excellence, require both time and encouragement to ſhew themſelves. She does not, beautiful as ſhe is, ſeize the ſoul by ſurpriſe, but, with more dangerous faſcination, ſhe ſteals it almoſt impereeptibly."

"Enough, my Lord," cried Sir Clement, "your ſolicitude for her welfare is now ſufficiently explained."

"My friendſhip and eſteem," returned Lord Orville, "I do not wiſh to diſguiſe; but aſſure yourſelf, Sir Clement, I ſhould not have troubled *you* upon this ſubject, had Miſs Anville and I ever converſed but as friends. However, ſince you do not chuſe to avow your intentions, we muſt drop the ſubject."

"My

"My intentions," cried he, "I will frankly own, are hardly known to myſelf. I think Miſs Anville the loveliеſt of her ſex, and, were I a *marrying man*, ſhe, of all the women I have ſeen, I would fix upon for a wife: but I believe that not even the philoſophy of your Lordſhip would recommend to me a connection of that ſort, with a girl of obſcure birth, whoſe only dowry is her beauty, and who is evidently in a ſtate of dependency."

"Sir Clement," cried Lord Orville, with ſome heat, "we will diſcuſs this point no further; we are both free-agents, and muſt act for ourſelves."

Here Mrs. Selwyn, fearing a ſurpriſe, and finding my apprehenſions of danger were groundleſs, retired haſtily into another walk, and ſoon after came to give me this account.

Good Heaven, what a man is this Sir Clement! ſo deſigning, though ſo eaſy; ſo deliberately artful, though ſo flighty! Greatly, however, is he miſtaken, all confident as he ſeems; for the girl, obſcure, poor, dependent as ſhe is, far from wiſhing the honour of his alliance, would not only *now*, but *always* have rejected it.

As to Lord Orville,—but I will not truſt my pen to mention him,—tell me, my dear Sir, what *you* think of him?—tell me if he

is not the nobleſt of men?—and if you can either wonder at, or blame my admiration?

The idea of being ſeen by either party, immediately after ſo ſingular a converſation, was both awkward and diſtreſſing to me; but I was obliged to appear at dinner. Sir Clement, I ſaw, was abſent and uneaſy; he watched me, he watched Lord Orville, and was evidently diſturbed in his mind. Whenever he ſpoke to me, I turned from him with undiſguiſed diſdain, for I am too much irritated againſt him, to bear with his ill-meant aſſiduities any longer.

But, not once,—not a moment did I dare meet the eyes of Lord Orville! All conſciouſneſs myſelf, I dreaded his penetration, and directed mine every way—but towards his. The reſt of the day I never quitted Mrs. Selwyn.

Adieu, my dear Sir: to-morrow I expect your directions whether I am to return to Berry Hill, or once more to viſit London.

LETTER XV.

Evelina in continuation.

Oct. 6th.

AND now, my deareſt Sir, if the perturbation of my ſpirits will allow me, I will finiſh my laſt letter from Clifton Hill.

This morning, though I did not go down ſtairs early, Lord Orville was the only perſon in the parlour when I entered it. I felt no ſmall confuſion at ſeeing him alone, after having ſo long and ſucceſsfully avoided ſuch a meeting. As ſoon as the uſual compliments were over, I would have left the room, but he ſtopped me by ſaying, "If I diſturb you, Miſs Anville, I am gone."

"My Lord," ſaid I, rather embarraſſed, "I did not mean to ſtay."

"I flattered myſelf," cried he, "I ſhould have had a moment's converſation with you."

I then turned back; and he ſeemed himſelf in ſome perplexity: but after a ſhort pauſe, "You are very good," ſaid he, "to indulge my requeſt; I have, indeed, for

ſome time paſt, moſt ardently deſired an opportunity of ſpeaking to you."

Again he pauſed; but I ſaid nothing, ſo he went on.

"You allowed me, Madam, a few days ſince, you allowed me to lay claim to your friendſhip,—to intereſt myſelf in your affairs,—to call you by the affectionate title of ſiſter;—and the honour you did me, no man could have been more ſenſible of; I am ignorant, therefore, how I have been ſo unfortunate as to forfeit it:—but, at preſent, all is changed! you fly me,—your averted eye ſhuns to meet mine, and you ſedulouſly avoid my converſation."

I was extremely diſconcerted at this grave, and but too juſt accuſation, and I am ſure I muſt look very ſimple;—but I made no anſwer.

"You will not, I hope," continued he, "condemn me unheard; if there is any thing I have done,—or any thing I have neglected, tell me, I beſeech you, *what*, and it ſhall be the whole ſtudy of my thoughts how to deſerve your pardon."

"Oh my Lord," cried I, penetrated at once with ſhame and gratitude, "your too, too great politeneſs oppreſſes me!—you have done nothing,—I have never dreamt of offence;—if there is any pardon to be aſked,

aſked, it is rather for *me*, than for *you* to aſk it."

"You are all ſweetneſs and condeſcenſion!" cried he, "and I flatter myſelf you will again allow me to claim thoſe titles which I find myſelf ſo unable to forego. Yet, occupied as I am with an idea which gives me the ſevereſt uneaſineſs, I hope you will not think me impertinent, if I ſtill ſolicit, ſtill entreat, nay implore you to tell me, to what cauſe your late ſudden, and to me moſt painful, reſerve was owing?

"Indeed, my Lord," ſaid I, ſtammering, "I don't, — I can't, — indeed, my Lord,—"

"I am ſorry to diſtreſs you," ſaid he; "and aſhamed to be ſo urgent,—yet I know not how to be ſatisfied while in ignorance,—and the *time* when the change happened, makes me apprehend—may I, Miſs Anville, tell you *what* it makes me apprehend?"

"Certainly, my Lord."

"Tell me, then,—and pardon a queſtion moſt eſſentially important to me,—Had, or had not, Sir Clement Willoughby, any ſhare in cauſing your inquietude?"

"No, my Lord," anſwered I, with firmneſs, "none in the world."

"A thouſand, thouſand thanks!" cried he: "you have relieved me from a weight

of conjecture which I ſupported very painfully. But one thing more; is it, in any meaſure, to Sir Clement that I may attribute the alteration in your behaviour to myſelf, which I could not but obſerve, began the very day of his arrival at the Hotwells?"

"To Sir Clement, my Lord," ſaid I, "attribute nothing. He is the laſt man in the world who would have any influence over my conduct."

"And will you, then, reſtore to me that ſhare of confidence and favour with which you honoured me before he came?"

Juſt then, to my great relief,—for I knew not what to ſay,—Mrs. Beaumont opened the door, and in a few minutes we went to breakfaſt.

Lord Orville was all gaiety; never did I ſee him more lively or more agreeable. Very ſoon after, Sir Clement Willoughby called, to pay his reſpects, he ſaid, to Mrs. Beaumont. I then came to my own room, where, indulging my reflections, which now ſoothed, and now alarmed me, I remained very quietly, till I received your moſt kind letter.

Oh Sir, how ſweet are the prayers you offer for your Evelina! how grateful to her are the bleſſings you pour upon her head! —You *commit me to my real parent*,—Ah, Guardian,

Guardian, Friend, Protector of my youth, —by whom my helpleſs infancy was cheriſhed, my mind formed, my very life preſerved,—*you* are the Parent my heart acknowledges, and to you do I vow eternal duty, gratitude, and affection!

I look forward to the approaching interview with more fear than hope; but important as is this ſubject, I am juſt now wholly engroſſed with another, which I muſt haſten to communicate.

I immediately acquainted Mrs. Selwyn with the purport of your letter. She was charmed to find your opinion agreed with her own, and ſettled that we ſhould go to town to-morrow morning. And a chaiſe is actually ordered to be here by one o'clock.

She then deſired me to pack up my cloaths; and ſaid ſhe muſt go, herſelf, to *make ſpeeches*, and *tell lies* to Mrs. Beaumont.

When I went down ſtairs to dinner, Lord Orville, who was ſtill in excellent ſpirits, reproached me for ſecluding myſelf ſo much from the company. He ſat next me,—he *would* ſit next me,—at table; and he might, I am ſure, repeat what he once ſaid of me before, *that he almoſt exhauſted himſelf in fruitleſs endeavours to entertain me*;—for, indeed, I was not to be entertained: I was

totally ſpiritleſs and dejected; the idea of the approaching meeting,—and oh, Sir, the idea of the approaching parting,—gave a heavineſs to my heart, that I could neither conquer nor repreſs. I even regretted the half explanation that had paſſed, and wiſhed Lord Orville had ſupported his own reſerve, and ſuffered me to ſupport mine.

However, when, during dinner, Mrs. Beaumont ſpoke of our journey, my gravity was no longer ſingular; a cloud inſtantly overſpread the countenance of Lord Orville, and he became nearly as thoughtful and as ſilent as myſelf.

We all went together to the drawing-room. After a ſhort and unentertaining converſation, Mrs. Selwyn ſaid ſhe muſt prepare for her journey, and begged me to ſee for ſome books ſhe had left in the parlour.

And here, while I was looking for them, I was followed by Lord Orville. He ſhut the door after he came in, and approaching me with a look of great anxiety, ſaid, "Is this true, Miſs Anville, are you going?"

"I believe ſo, my Lord," ſaid I, ſtill looking for the books.

"So ſuddenly, ſo unexpectedly, muſt I loſe you?"

"No

"No great loſs, my Lord," cried I, endeavouring to ſpeak chearfully.

"Is it poſſible," ſaid he, gravely, "Miſs Anville can doubt my ſincerity?"

"I can't imagine," cried I, "what Mrs. Selwyn has done with theſe books."

"Would to Heaven," continued he, "I might flatter myſelf you would allow me to prove it!"

"I muſt run up ſtairs," cried I, greatly confuſed, "and aſk what ſhe has done with them."

"You are going, then," cried he, taking my hand, "and you give me not the ſmalleſt hope of your return!—will you not, then, my too lovely friend!—will you not, at leaſt, teach me, with fortitude like your own, to ſupport your abſence?"

"My Lord," cried I, endeavouring to diſengage my hand, "pray let me go!"

"I will;" cried he, to my inexpreſſible confuſion, dropping on one knee, "if you wiſh to leave me!"

"Oh, my Lord," exclaimed I, "riſe, I beſeech you, riſe!—ſuch a poſture to me!—ſurely your Lordſhip is not ſo cruel as to mock me!"

"Mock you!" repeated he earneſtly, "no, I revere you! I eſteem and I admire you above all human beings! you are the friend to whom my ſoul is attached as to its

its better half! you are the moſt amiable, the moſt perfect of women! and you are dearer to me than language has the power of telling!"

I attempt not to deſcribe my ſenſations at that moment; I ſcarce breathed; I doubted if I exiſted,—the blood forſook my cheeks, and my feet refuſed to ſuſtain me: Lord Orville, haſtily riſing, ſupported me to a chair, upon which I ſunk, almoſt lifeleſs.

For a few minutes, we neither of us ſpoke; and then, ſeeing me recover, Lord Orville, though in terms hardly articulate, entreated my pardon for his abruptneſs. The moment my ſtrength returned, I attempted to riſe, but he would not permit me.

I cannot write the ſcene that followed, though every word is engraven on my heart: but his proteſtations, his expreſſions, were too flattering for repetition: nor would he, in ſpite of my repeated efforts to leave him, ſuffer me to eſcape;—in ſhort, my dear Sir, I was not proof againſt his ſolicitations—and he drew from me the moſt ſacred ſecret of my heart!

I know not how long we were together, but Lord Orville was upon his knees, when the door was opened by Mrs. Selwyn!—To tell you, Sir, the ſhame with which I was

overwhelmed, would be impoſſible;—I ſnatched my hand from Lord Orville,—he, too, ſtarted and roſe, and Mrs. Selwyn, for ſome inſtants, ſtood facing us both in ſilence.

At laſt, "My Lord," ſaid ſhe, ſarcaſtically, "have you been ſo good as to help Miſs Anville to look for my books?"

"Yes, Madam," anſwered he, attempting to rally, "and I hope we ſhall ſoon be able to find them."

"Your Lordſhip is extremely kind," ſaid ſhe, dryly, "but I can by no means conſent to take up any more of your time." Then, looking on the window-ſeat, ſhe preſently found the books, and added, "Come, here are juſt three, and ſo, like the ſervants in the Drummer, this important affair may give employment to us all." She then preſented one of them to Lord Orville, another to me, and taking a third herſelf, with a moſt provoking look, ſhe left the room.

I would inſtantly have followed her; but Lord Orville, who could not help laughing, begged me to ſtay a minute, as he had many important matters to diſcuſs.

"No, indeed, my Lord, I cannot,—perhaps I have already ſtayed too long."

"Does

"Does Miſs Anville ſo ſoon repent her goodneſs?"

"I ſcarce know what I do, my Lord,—I am quite bewildered!"

"One hour's converſation," cried he, "will I hope compoſe your ſpirits, and confirm my happineſs. When, then, may I hope to ſee you alone?—ſhall you walk in the garden to-morrow before breakfaſt?"

"No, no, my Lord; you muſt not, a ſecond time, reproach me with making an *appointment*."

"Do you then," ſaid he, laughing, "reſerve that honour only for Mr. Macartney?"

"Mr. Macartney," ſaid I, "is poor, and thinks himſelf obliged to me; otherwiſe—"

"Poverty," cried he, "I will not plead; but if being *obliged* to you has any weight, who ſhall diſpute *my* title to an appointment?"

"My Lord, I can ſtay no longer,—Mrs. Selwyn will loſe all patience."

"Deprive her not of the pleaſure of her *conjectures*;—but, tell me, are you under Mrs. Selwyn's care?"

"Only for the preſent, my Lord."

"Not a few are the queſtions I have to aſk

aſk Miſs Anville: among them, the moſt important is, whether ſhe depends wholly on herſelf, or whether there is any other perſon for whoſe intereſt I muſt ſolicit?"

"I hardly know, my Lord, I hardly know myſelf to whom I moſt belong."

"Suffer, ſuffer me, then," cried he, with warmth, "to haſten the time when that ſhall no longer admit a doubt!—when your grateful Orville may call you all his own!"

At length, but with difficulty, I broke from him. I went, however, to my own room, for I was too much agitated to follow Mrs. Selwyn. Good God, my dear Sir, what a ſcene! ſurely the meeting for which I ſhall prepare to-morrow, cannot ſo greatly affect me! To be loved by Lord Orville,—to be the honoured choice of his noble heart,—my happineſs ſeemed too infinite to be borne, and I wept, even bitterly I wept, from the exceſs of joy which overpowered me.

In this ſtate of almoſt painful felicity, I continued, till I was ſummoned to tea. When I re-entered the drawing-room, I rejoiced much to find it full of company, as the confuſion with which I met Lord Orville was rendered the leſs obſervable.

Immediately after tea, moſt of the company

pany played at cards,—and then,—and till ſupper-time, Lord Orville devoted himſelf wholly to me.

He ſaw that my eyes were red, and would not let me reſt till he had made me confeſs the cauſe; and when, though moſt reluctantly, I had acknowledged my weakneſs, I could with difficulty refrain from weeping again at the gratitude he expreſſed.

He earneſtly deſired to know if my journey could not be poſtponed; and when I ſaid no, entreated permiſſion to attend me to town.

"Oh, my Lord," cried I, "what a requeſt!"

"The ſooner," anſwered he, "I make my devotion to you public, the ſooner I may expect, from your delicacy, you will convince the world you encourage no mere *danglers*."

"You teach me, then, my Lord, the inference I might expect, if I complied."

"And can you wonder I ſhould ſeek to haſten the happy time, when no ſcruples, no diſcretion will demand our ſeparation? and when the moſt punctilious delicacy will rather promote, than oppoſe, my happineſs in attending you?"

To this I was ſilent, and he re-urged his requeſt.

"My Lord," ſaid I, "you aſk what I have

have no power to grant. This journey will deprive me of all right to act for myſelf."

"What does Miſs Anville mean?"

"I cannot now explain myſelf; indeed, if I could, the taſk would be both painful and tedious."

"O Miſs Anville," cried he, "when may I hope to date the period of this myſtery? when flatter myſelf that my promiſed friend will indeed honour me with her confidence?"

"My Lord," ſaid I, "I mean not to affect any myſtery,—but my affairs are ſo circumſtanced, that a long and moſt unhappy ſtory, can alone explain them. However, if a ſhort ſuſpenſe will give your Lordſhip any uneaſineſs,—"

"My beloved Miſs Anville," cried he, eagerly, "pardon my impatience!—You ſhall tell me nothing you would wiſh to conceal,—I will wait your own time for information, and truſt to your goodneſs for its ſpeed."

"There is *nothing*, my Lord, I wiſh to conceal,—to *poſtpone* an explanation is all I deſire."

He then requeſted, that, ſince I would not allow him to accompany me to town, I would permit him to write to me, and promiſe to anſwer his letters.

A ſudden

A ſudden recollection of the two letters which had already paſſed between us occurring to me, I haſtily anſwered, "No indeed, my Lord!—"

"I am extremely ſorry," ſaid he, gravely, "that you think me too preſumptuous. I muſt own I had flattered myſelf, that to ſoften the inquietude of an abſence which ſeems attended by ſo many inexplicable circumſtances, would not have been to incur your diſpleaſure."

This ſerioufneſs hurt me; and I could not forbear ſaying, "Can you indeed deſire, my Lord, that I ſhould, a ſecond time, expoſe myſelf by an unguarded readineſs to write to you?"

"*A ſecond time! unguarded readineſs!*" repeated he; "you amaze me!"

"Has your Lordſhip then quite forgot the fooliſh letter I was ſo imprudent as to ſend you when in town?"

"I have not the leaſt idea," cried he, "of what you mean."

"Why then, my Lord," ſaid I, "we had better let the ſubject drop."

"Impoſſible!" cried he, "I cannot reſt without an explanation!"

And then, he obliged me to ſpeak very openly of both the letters; but, my dear Sir, imagine my ſurpriſe, when he aſſured me, in the moſt ſolemn manner, that far from

from having ever written me a ſingle line, he had never received, ſeen, or heard of my letter!

This ſubject, which cauſed mutual aſtoniſhment and perplexity to us both, entirely engroſſed us for the reſt of the evening; and he made me promiſe to ſhew him the letter I had received in his name to-morrow morning, that he might endeavour to diſcover the author.

After ſupper, the converſation became general.

And now, my deareſt Sir, may I not call for your congratulations upon the events of this day? a day never to be recollected by me but with the moſt grateful joy! I know how much you are inclined to think well of Lord Orville, I cannot, therefore, apprehend that my frankneſs to him will diſpleaſe you. Perhaps the time is not very diſtant when your Evelina's choice may receive the ſanction of her beſt friend's judgment and approbation,—which ſeems now all ſhe has to wiſh!

In regard to the change in my ſituation which muſt firſt take place, ſurely I cannot be blamed for what has paſſed! the partiality of Lord Orville muſt not only reflect honour upon me, but upon all to whom I do, or may belong.

Adieu,

Adieu, moſt dear Sir. I will write again when I arrive at London.

LETTER XVI.

Eveline in continuation.

Clifton, Oct. 7th.

YOU will ſee, my dear Sir, that I was miſtaken in ſuppoſing I ſhould write no more from this place, where my reſidence, now, ſeems more uncertain than ever.

This morning, during breakfaſt, Lord Orville took an opportunity to beg me, in a low voice, to allow him a moment's converſation before I left Clifton; "May I hope," added he, "that you will ſtrole into the garden after breakfaſt?"

I made no anſwer, but I believe my looks gave no denial; for, indeed, I much wiſhed to be ſatisfied concerning the letter. The moment, therefore, that I could quit the parlour, I ran up ſtairs for my calaſh; but before I reached my room, Mrs. Selwyn called after me, "If you are going to walk, Miſs Anville, be ſo good as to bid Jenny bring down my hat, and I'll accompany you."

Very

Very much diſconcerted, I turned into the drawing-room, without making any anſwer, and there I hoped to wait unſeen, till ſhe had otherwiſe diſpoſed of herſelf. But, in a few minutes, the door opened, and Sir Clement Willoughby entered.

Starting at the ſight of him, in riſing haſtily, I let drop the letter which I had brought for Lord Orville's inſpection, and, before I could recover it, Sir Clement, ſpringing forward, had it in his hand. He was juſt preſenting it to me, and, at the ſame time, enquiring after my health, when the ſignature caught his eye, and he read aloud "Orville."

I endeavoured, eagerly, to ſnatch it from him, but he would not permit me, and, holding it faſt, in a paſſionate manner exclaimed, "Good God, Miſs Anville, is it poſſible you can value ſuch a letter as this?"

The queſtion ſurpriſed and confounded me, and I was too much aſhamed to anſwer him; but finding he made an attempt to ſecure it, I prevented him, and vehemently demanded him to return it.

"Tell me firſt," ſaid he, holding it above my reach, "tell me if you have, ſince, received any more letters from the ſame perſon?"

"No, indeed," cried I, "never!"

"And

"And will you, alſo, ſweeteſt of women, promiſe that you never will receive any more? Say that, and you will make me the happieſt of men."

"Sir Clement," cried I, greatly confuſed, "pray give me the letter."

"And will you not firſt ſatisfy my doubts?—will you not relieve me from the torture of the moſt diſtracting ſuſpenſe?—tell me but that the deteſted Orville has written to you no more!"

"Sir Clement," cried I, angrily, "you have no right to make any conditions,—ſo pray give me the letter directly."

"Why ſuch ſolicitude about this hateful letter? can it poſſibly deſerve your eagerneſs? tell me, with truth, with ſincerity tell me, Does it really merit the leaſt anxiety?"

"No matter, Sir," cried I, in great perplexity, "the letter is mine, and therefore—"

"I muſt conclude, then," ſaid he, "that the letter deſerves your utmoſt contempt,—but that the name of Orville is ſufficient to make you prize it."

"Sir Clement," cried I, colouring, "you are quite—you are very much—the letter is not—"

"O Miſs Anville," cried he, "you bluſh!

blush!—you stammer!—Great Heaven! it is then all as I feared!

"I know not," cried I, half frightened, "what you mean; but I beseech you to give me that letter, and compose yourself."

"This letter," cried he, gnashing his teeth, "you shall never see more! You ought to have burnt it the moment you had read it! And in an instant he tore it into a thousand pieces.

Alarmed at a fury so indecently outrageous, I would have run out of the room; but he caught hold of my gown, and cried, "Not yet, not yet must you go! I am but half-mad yet, and you must stay to finish your work. Tell me, therefore, does Orville know your faithless partiality?—Say yes," added he, trembling with passion, "and I will fly you for ever!"

"For Heaven's sake, Sir Clement," cried I, "release me!—if you do not, you will force me to call for help."

"Call then!" cried he, "inexorable and most unfeeling girl, call, if you please, and bid all the world witness your triumph;—but could ten worlds obey your call, I would not part from you till you had answered me. Tell me, then, does Orville know you love him?"

At any other time, an enquiry so gross

would have given me inexpressible confusion; but now, the wildness of his manner terrified me, and I only said, "Whatever you wish to know, Sir Clement, I will tell you another time; but for the present, I entreat you to let me go!"

"Enough," cried he, "I understand you! the art of Orville has prevailed, cold, inanimate, phlegmatic as he is, you have rendered him the most envied of men!—One thing more, and I have done: Will he marry you?"

What a question! my cheeks glowed with indignation, and I felt too proud to make any answer.

"I see, I see how it is," cried he, after a short pause, "and I find I am undone for ever!" Then, letting loose my gown, he put his hand to his forehead, and walked up and down the room in a hasty and agitated manner.

Though now at liberty to go, I had not the courage to leave him, for his evident distress excited all my compassion. And this was our situation, when Lady Louisa, Mr. Coverley, and Mrs. Beaumont entered the room.

"Sir Clement Willoughby," said the latter, "I beg pardon for making you wait so long, but—"

She had not time for another word; Sir Clement,

Clement, too much disordered to know or care what he did, snatched up his hat, and, brushing hastily past her, flew down stairs, and out of the house.

And with him went my sincerest pity, though I earnestly hope I shall see him no more. But what, my dear Sir, am I to conclude from his strange speeches concerning the letter? does it not seem as if he was himself the author of it? How else should he be so well acquainted with the contempt it merits? Neither do I know another human being who could serve any interest by such a deception. I remember, too, that just as I had given my own letter to the maid, Sir Clement came into the shop; probably he prevailed upon her, by some bribery, to give it to him, and afterwards, by the same means, to deliver to me an answer of his own writing. Indeed I can in no other manner account for this affair. Oh, Sir Clement, were you not yourself unhappy, I know not how I could pardon an artifice that has caused me so much uneasiness!

His abrupt departure occasioned a kind of general consternation.

"Very extraordinary behaviour this!" cried Mrs. Beaumont.

"Egad," said Mr. Coverley, "the Ba-

one has a mind to tip us a touch of the heroics this morning!"

"I declare," cried Lady Louisa, "I never saw any thing so monstrous in my life! it's quite abominable!—I fancy the man's mad!—I'm sure he has given me a shocking fright!"

Soon after, Mrs. Selwyn came up stairs, with Lord Merton. The former, advancing hastily to me, said, "Miss Anville, have you an almanack?"

"No, Madam."

"Who has one, then?"

"Egad," cried Mr. Coverley, "I never bought one in my life; it would make me quite melancholy to have such a time-keeper in my pocket. I would as soon walk all day before an hour-glass."

"You are in the right," said Mrs. Selwyn, not to *watch time*, lest you should be betrayed, unawares, into reflecting how you employ it."

"Egad, Ma'am," cried he, "if Time thought no more of me, than I do of Time, I believe I should bid defiance, for one while, to old age and wrinkles,—for deuce take me if ever I think about it at all."

"Pray, Mr. Coverley," said Mrs. Selwyn, "why do you think it necessary to tell me this so often?"

"Often!" repeated he, "Egad, Madam,

dam, I don't know why I said it now,—but I'm ſure I can't recollect that ever I owned as much before."

"Owned it before!" cried ſhe, "why, my dear Sir, you own it all day long; for every word, every look, every action proclaims it."

I know not if he underſtood the full ſeverity of her ſatire, but he only turned off with a laugh; and ſhe then applied to Mr. Lovel, and aſked if *he* had an almanack?

Mr. Lovel, who always looks alarmed when ſhe addreſſes him, with ſome heſitation anſwered, I aſſure you, Ma'am, I have no manner of antipathy to an almanack,—none in the leaſt,—I aſſure you,—I dare ſay I have four or five."

"Four or five!—pray may I aſk what uſe you make of ſo many?"

"Uſe!—really, Ma'am, as to that,—I don't make any particular uſe of them,—but one muſt have them, to tell one the day of the month,—I'm ſure, elſe, I ſhould never keep it in my head."

"And does your time paſs ſo ſmoothly unmarked, that, without an almanack, you could not diſtinguiſh one day from another?"

"Really, Ma'am," cried he, colouring, "I don't ſee any thing ſo very particular in having a few almanacks; other people have them, I believe, as well as me."

"Don't be offended," cried he, "I have but made a little digreſſion. All I want to know, is the ſtate of the moon,—for if it is at the *full*, I ſhall be ſaved a world of conjectures, and know at once to what cauſe to attribute the inconſiſtencies I have witneſſed this morning. In the firſt place, I heard lord Orville excuſe himſelf from going out, becauſe he had buſineſs of importance to tranſact at home, yet have I ſeen him ſauntering alone in the garden this half-hour. Miſs Anville, on the other hand, I invited to walk out with me; and, after ſeeking her every where round the houſe, I find her quietly ſeated in the drawing-room. And but a few minutes ſince, Sir Clement Willoughby, with even more than his uſual politeneſs, told me he was come to ſpend the morning here,—when, juſt now, I met him flying down ſtairs, as if purſued by the Furies; and, far from repeating his compliments, or making any excuſe, he did not even anſwer a queſtion I aſked him, but ruſhed paſt me, with the rapidity of a thief from a bailiff!"

"I proteſt," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont, "I can't think what he meant; ſuch rudeneſs from a man of any family is quite incomprehenſible."

"My Lord," cried Lady Louiſa to Lord Merton, "Do you know he did the

ſame

ſame by *me*?—I was juſt going to aſk him what was the matter, but he ran paſt me ſo quick, that I declare he quite dazzled my eyes. You can't think, my Lord, how he frighted me; I dare ſay I look as pale —don't I look very pale, my Lord?

Your Ladyſhip, ſaid Mr. Lovel, well becomes the lilies, that the roſes might bluſh to ſee themſelves ſo excelled.

Pray, Mr. Lovel, ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, if the roſes ſhould bluſh, how would you find it out?

Egad, cried Mr. Coverley, I ſuppoſe they muſt bluſh, as the ſayings, like a blue dog.—for they are red already.

Prithee, Jack, ſaid Lord Merton, don't you pretend to talk about bluſhes, that never knew what they were in your life.

My Lord, ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, if experience alone can fully recounting them, what an admirable treatiſe upon the ſubject may we not expect from your Lordſhip!

"O, pray, Ma'am," anſwered he, "ſtick to Jack Coverley,—he's your only man: for my part, I confeſs I have a mortal averſion to arguments."

"O fie, my Lord," cried Mrs. Selwyn, a ſenator of the nation, a member of

the noblest parliament in the world!—and yet neglect the art of oratory?"

"Why, faith, my Lord," said Mr. Lovel, "I think, in general, your House is not much addicted to study; we of the lower House have indubitably most application; and, if I did not speak before a superior power," bowing low to Lord Merton, "I should presume to add," we have likewise the most able speakers."

"Mr. Lovel," said Mrs. Selwyn, "you deserve immortality for that discovery! But for this observation, and the confession of Lord Merton, I protest I should have supposed that a peer of the realm, and an able logician, were synonymous terms."

Lord Merton, turning upon his heel, asked Lady Louisa if she should *take the air* before dinner?

"Really," answered she, "I don't know;—I'm afraid it's monstrous hot; besides," (putting her hand to her forehead) "I ain't half well; it's quite horrid to have such weak nerves!—the least thing in the world discomposes me: I declare, that man's oddness has given me such a shock,—I don't know when I shall recover from it. But I'm a sad weak creature,—don't you think I am, my Lord?"

"O, by no means," answered he, "your Ladyship is merely delicate,—and devil take

take me if ever I had the least passion for an Amazon."

"I have the honour to be quite of your Lordship's opinion," said Mr. Lovel, looking maliciously at Mrs. Selwyn; "for I have an insuperable aversion to strength, either of body or mind, in a female."

"Faith, and so have I," said Mr. Coverley; "for egad I'd as soon see a woman chop wood, as hear her chop logic."

"So would every man in his senses," said Lord Merton; "for a woman wants nothing to recommend her but beauty and good-nature; in every thing else she is either impertinent or unnatural. For my part, deuce take me if ever I vouch to hear a word of sense from a woman as long as I live."

"It has always been agreed," said Mrs. Selwyn, looking round her with the utmost contempt, "that no man ought to be compared with a woman whose understanding is superior to his own. I vow I very much fear that to accommodate all this good company, according to such a rule, would be utterly impracticable, unless we should chuse subjects from Swift's hospital of idiots."

How many enemies, my dear Sir, does this unbounded severity excite! Lord Merton, however, only whistled; Mr. Coverley

ley sang, and Mr. Lovel, after biting his lips some time, said, "Bon honour, that lady—if she was not a lady,—I should be half tempted to observe,—that there is something,—in such severity,—that is rather, I must say,—rather—*oddish*."

Just then, a servant brought Lady Louisa a note, upon a *waiter*, which is a ceremony always used to her Ladyship, and I took the opportunity of this interruption to the conversation, to steal out of the room.

I went immediately to the parlour, which I found quite empty; for I did not dare walk in the garden after what Mrs. Selwyn had said.

In a few minutes, a servant announced Mr. Macartney, saying, as he entered the room, that he would acquaint Lord Orville he was there.

Mr. Macartney rejoiced much at finding me alone. He told me he had taken the liberty to enquire for Lord Orville, by way of pretext for coming to the house.

I then very eagerly enquired if he had seen his father.

"I have, Madam," said he; "and the generous compassion you have shewn made me hasten to acquaint you, that upon reading my unhappy mother's letter, he did not hesitate to acknowledge me."

"Good God," cried I, with no little

 emotion,

emotion, "how similar are our circumstances! And did he receive you kindly?"

"I could not, Madam, expect that he would: the cruel transaction which obliged me to fly Paris, was too recent in his memory."

"And, I—have you seen the young lady?"

"No, Madam," said he mournfully, "I was forbid her sight."

"Forbid her sight!—and why?"

"Partly, perhaps, from prudence,—and partly from the remains of a resentment which will not easily subside. I only requested leave to acquaint her with my relationship, and be allowed to call her sister;—but it was denied me!—*You have no sister*, said Sir John, *you must forget her existence*. Hard, and vain command!"

"You have, you have a sister!" cried I, from an impulse of pity, which I could not repress, "a sister who is most warmly interested in your welfare, and who only wants opportunity to manifest her friendship and regard."

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, "what does Miss Anville mean?"

"Anville," said I, "is not my real name; Sir John Belmont is my father,—he is your's,—and I am your sister!—You see, therefore, the claim we mutually have

to each other's regard, we are not merely bound by the ties of friendship, but by those of blood. I feel for you, already, all the affection of a sister, which is, indeed, before I knew I was one.—Why, my dear brother, do you not speak?—do you hesitate to acknowledge me?"

"I am so lost in astonishment," cried he, "that I know not if I hear right!"

"I have then found a brother," cried I, holding out my hand, "and he will not own me?"

"Own you!—Oh, Madam," cried he, accepting my offered hand, "is it, indeed, possible *you* can own *me*?—a poor, wretched adventurer! who so lately had no support but from your generosity!—whom your benevolence snatched from utter destruction?—Can *you*,—Oh Madam, can you, indeed, and without a blush, condescend to own such an outcast for a brother?"

"Oh, forbear, forbear!" I cried, "is this language proper for a sister? are we not reciprocally bound to each other?—Will you not suffer me to expect from you all the good offices in your power?—But tell me, where is our father at present?"

"At the Hotwell, Madam; he arrived there yesterday morning."

I would

I would have proceeded with further questions, but the entrance of Lord Orville prevented me. The moment he saw me, he started, and would have retreated, but, drawing my hand from Mr. Macartney's, I begged him to come in.

For a few moments we were all silent; and, I believe, all in equal confusion. Mr. Macartney, however, recollecting himself, said, "I hope your lordship will forgive the liberty I have taken in making use of your name?"

Lord Orville, rather coldly, bowed, but said nothing.

Again we were all silent, and then Mr. Macartney took leave.

"I fancy," said Lord Orville, when he was gone, "I have shortened Mr. Macartney's visit?"

"No, my Lord, not at all."

"I had presumed," said he, with some hesitation, "I should have seen Miss Anville in the garden;—but I knew not she was so much better engaged."

Before I could answer, a servant came to tell me the chaise was ready, and that Mrs. Selwyn was enquiring for me.

"I will wait on her immediately," cried I, and away I was running; but Lord Orville, stopping me, said, with great emo-

tion, "Is it thus, Miss Anville, you leave me?—Mr. Macartney is my brother."

"My Lord," cried I, "how can I help it?—perhaps, soon, some happy opportunity may offer—"

"Good Heaven!" cried he, "do you indeed take me for a Stoic? What better opportunity may I hope for?—is not the chaise come?—and you not going?—have you even deigned to tell me whither?"

"My journey, my Lord, is now" be deferred. Mr. Macartney has brought me intelligence which renders it, at present, unnecessary."

"Mr. Macartney," said he, gravely, "seems to have great influence, methinks, for so very young a counsellor."

"Is it possible, my Lord," cried I, "Mr. Macartney can give you the least uneasiness?"

"My dearest Miss Anville," said he, taking my hand, "I see, and I adore the purity of your mind, superior as it is to all little arts, and all apprehensions of suspicion; and I should do myself, as well as you, injustice, if I were capable of harbouring the smallest doubts of that goodness which makes you mine for ever: nevertheless, pardon me, if I own myself surprised,—nay, alarmed, at these frequent meetings with so young a man as Mr. Macartney."

"My

"My Lord," cried I, eager to clear myself, "Mr. Macartney is my brother!"

"Your brother!—you amaze me!—What strange mystery, then, makes his relationship a secret?"

Just then Mrs. Selwyn opened the door. "Oh you are here!" cried she; "Pray is my Lord so kind as to assist you in preparing for your journey?—or in *retarding* it?"

"I should be most happy," said Lord Orville, smiling, "if it were in my power to do the *latter*."

I then acquainted her with Mr. Macartney's communication.

She immediately ordered the chaise away, and then took me into her own room, to consider what should be done.

A few minutes sufficed to determine her, and she wrote the following note.

To Sir John Belmont, Bart.

MRS. Selwyn presents her compliments to Sir John Belmont, and, if he is at leisure, will be glad to wait on him this morning, upon business of importance.

She

She then ordered her man to enquire at the pump-room for a direction; and went herself to Mrs. Beaumont, to apologise for deferring her journey.

An answer was presently returned, that he would be glad to see her.

She would have had me immediately accompany her to the Hotwells; but I entreated her to spare me the distress of so abrupt an introduction, and to pave the way for my reception. She consented rather reluctantly, and, attended only by her servant, walked to the Wells.

She was not absent two hours, yet so miserably did time seem to linger, that I thought a thousand accidents had happened, and feared she would never return. I passed the whole time in my own room, for I was too much agitated even to converse with Lord Orville.

The instant that, from my window, I saw her returning, I flew down stairs, and met her in the garden.

We both walked to the arbour.

Her looks, in which disappointment and anger were expressed, presently announced to me the failure of her embassy. Finding that she did not speak, I asked her, in a faultering voice, Whether or not I had a father?

"You

"You have *not*, my dear!" said he, abruptly.

"Very well, Madam," said I, with tolerable calmneſs, "let the chaiſe, then, be ordered again,—I will go to Berry Hill,—and there, I truſt, I ſhall ſtill find one!"

It was ſome time ere ſhe could give, or I could hear, the account of her viſit; and then ſhe related it in a haſty manner, yet I believe I can recollect every word.

"I found Sir John alone. He received me with the utmoſt politeneſs. I did not keep him a moment in ſuſpenſe as to the purport of my viſit. But I had no ſooner made it known, than, with a ſupercilious ſmile, he ſaid, 'And have you, Madam, been prevailed upon to revive that ridiculous old ſtory?' Ridiculous, I told him, was a term which he would find no one elſe do him the favour to make uſe of, in ſpeaking of the horrible actions belonging to the *old ſtory* he made ſo light of; 'actions,' continued I, 'which would dye ſtill deeper the black annals of Nero or Caligula.' He attempted in vain to rally, for I purſued him with all the ſeverity in my power, and ceaſed not painting the enormity of his crime, till I ſtung him to the quick, and in a voice of paſſion and impatience, he ſaid, 'No more, Madam,—this is not a ſubject upon which I need a monitor.'

"Make,

"Make, then," cried I, "the only reparation in your power.—Your daughter is now at Clifton; send for her hither, and, in the face of the world, proclaim the legitimacy of her birth, and clear the reputation of your injured wife." "Madam," said he, "you are much mistaken, if you suppose I waited for the honour of this visit, before I did what little justice now depends upon me, to the memory of that unfortunate woman: her daughter has been my care from her infancy; I have taken her into my house; she bears my name, and she will be my sole heiress." For some time this assertion appeared so absurd, that I only laughed at it; but at last, he assured me, I had myself been imposed upon, for that the very woman who attended Lady Belmont in her last illness, conveyed the child to him while he was in London, before she was a year old. Unwilling, he added, at that time to confirm the rumour of my being married, I sent the woman with the child to France, as soon as she was old enough. I put her into a convent, where she has been properly educated; and now I have taken her home. I have acknowledged her for my lawful child, and paid, at length, to the memory of her unhappy mother, a tribute of fame, which has made me wish to hide myself hereafter

hereafter from all the world."—This whole story sounded so improbable, that I did not scruple to tell him I discredited every word. He then rung his bell, and enquiring if his hair-dresser was come, said he was sorry to leave me, but that, if I would favour him with my company to-morrow, he would do himself the honour of introducing Miss Belmont to *me*, instead of troubling me to introduce her to *him*. I rose in great indignation, and assuring him I would make his conduct as public as it was infamous, I left the house.

Good Heaven, how strange the recital! how incomprehensible an affair! The Miss Belmont, then, who is actually at Bristol, passes for the daughter of my unhappy mother!—passes, in short, for your Evelina! Who she can be, or what this tale can mean, I have not any idea.

Mrs. Selwyn soon after left me to my own reflections. Indeed they were not very pleasant. Quietly as I had borne her relation, the moment I was alone I felt most bitterly both the disgrace and the sorrow of a rejection so cruelly inexplicable.

I know not how long I might have continued in this situation, had I not been awakened from my melancholy reverie by the voice of Lord Orville. "May I come in," cried he, "or shall I interrupt you?"

I was

I was silent, and he seated himself next me.

"I fear," he continued, "Miss Anville will think I persecute her; yet so much as I have to say, and so much as I wish to hear, with so few opportunities for either, she cannot wonder,—and I hope she will not be offended,—that I seize with such avidity every moment in my power to converse with her. You are grave," added he, taking my hand; "I hope you do not regret the delay of your journey?—I hope the pleasure it gives to *me*, will not be a subject of pain to *you*?—You are silent!—Something, I am sure, has afflicted you:—Would to Heaven I were able to console you!—Would to Heaven I were worthy to participate in your sorrows!"

My heart was too full to bear this kindness, and I could only answer by my tears.

"Good Heaven," cried he, "how you alarm me!—My love, my sweet Miss Anville, deny me no longer to be the sharer of your griefs!—tell me, at least, that you have not withdrawn your esteem!—that you do not repent the goodness you have shewn me!—that you still think me the same grateful Orville whose heart you have deigned to accept!"

"Oh, my Lord," cried I, "your generosity overpowers me!" And I wept like an

an infant. For now that all my hopes of being acknowledged ſeemed finally cruſhed, I felt the nobleneſs of his diſintereſted regard ſo forcibly, that I could ſcarce breathe under the weight of gratitude which oppreſſed me.

He ſeemed greatly ſhocked, and in terms the moſt flattering, the moſt reſpectfully tender, he at once ſoothed my diſtreſs, and urged me to tell him its cauſe.

"My Lord," ſaid I, when I was able to ſpeak, "you little know what an outcaſt you have honoured with your choice!—a child of bounty,—an orphan from infancy,—dependent, even for ſubſiſtence dependent, upon the kindneſs of compaſſion!—Rejected by my natural friends,—diſowned for ever by my neareſt relation,—Oh, my Lord, ſo circumſtanced, can I deſerve the diſtinction with which you honour me? No, no, I feel the inequality too painfully;—you muſt leave me, my Lord, you muſt ſuffer me to return to obſcurity,—and there, in the boſom of my firſt, beſt, my only friend,—I will pour forth all the grief of my heart!—while you, my Lord, muſt ſeek elſewhere——"

I could not proceed; my whole ſoul recoiled againſt the charge I would have given, and my voice refuſed to utter it.

"Never!"

"Never!" cried he, warmly; "my heart is yours, and I swear to you an attachment eternal!—You prepare me, indeed, for a tale of horror, and I am almost breathless with expectation—but so firm is my conviction, that, whatever are your misfortunes, to have merited them is not of the number, that I feel myself more strongly, more invincibly devoted to you than ever!—Tell me but where I may find this noble friend, whose virtues you have already taught me to reverence,—and I will fly to obtain his consent and intercession, that henceforward our fates may be indissolubly united,—and then shall it be the sole study of my life to endeavour to soften your past,—and guard you from future misfortunes!"

I had just raised my eyes, to answer this most generous of men, when the first object they met was Mrs. Selwyn!

"So, my dear," cried she, what, still courting the rural shades!—I thought ere now you would have been satiated with this retired seat, and I have been seeking you all over the house. But I find the only way to meet with *you*,—is to enquire for *Lord Orville*. However, don't let me disturb your meditations; you are possibly planning some pastoral dialogue."

And

And, with this provoking ſpeech, ſhe walked on.

In the greateſt confuſion, I was quitting the arbour, when Lord Orville ſaid, "Permit *me* to follow Mrs. Selwyn,—it is time to put an end to all impertinent conjectures; will you allow me to ſpeak to her openly?"

I aſſented in ſilence, and he left me.

I then went to my own room, where I continued till I was ſummoned to dinner; after which, Mrs. Selwyn invited me to her's.

The moment ſhe had ſhut the door, "Your Ladyſhip, ſaid ſhe, will, I hope, be ſeated."

"Ma'am!" cried I, ſtaring.

"O the ſweet innocent! So you don't know what I mean?—but, my dear, my ſole view is to accuſtom you a little to your dignity elect, leſt, when you are addreſſed by your title, you ſhould look another way, from an apprehenſion of liſtening to a diſcourſe not meant for you to hear."

Having, in this manner, diverted herſelf with my confuſion, till her raillery was almoſt exhauſted, ſhe congratulated me very ſeriouſly upon the partiality of Lord Orville, ſaid painted to me, in the ſtrongeſt terms, his diſintereſted deſire of being married to me immediately. She had told him,

him, she said, my whole story; and yet he was willing, nay eager, that our union should take place of any further application to my family. "Now, my dear," continued she, "I advise you by all means to marry him directly; nothing can be more precarious than our success with Sir John; and the young men of this age are not to be trusted with too much time for deliberation, where their interests are concerned."

"Good God, Madam," cried I, "do you think I would *hurry* Lord Orville?"

"Well, do as you will," said she; "luckily you have an excellent subject for Quixotism;—otherwise, this delay might prove your ruin: but Lord Orville is almost as romantic as if he had been born and bred at Berry Hill."

She then proposed, as no better expedient seemed likely to be suggested, that I should accompany her at once in her visit to the Hotwells to-morrow morning.

The very idea made me tremble; yet she represented so strongly the necessity of pursuing this unhappy affair with spirit, or giving it totally up, that, wanting her force of argument, I was almost obliged to yield to her proposal.

In the evening, we all walked in the garden: and Lord Orville, who never quitted

quitted my ſide, told me he had been liſtening to a tale, which, though it had removed the perplexities that had ſo long tormented him, had penetrated him with ſorrow and compaſſion. I acquainted him with Mrs. Selwyn's plan for to-morrow, and confeſſed the extreme terror it gave me. He then, in a manner almoſt unanſwerable, beſought me to leave to him the conduct of the affair, by conſenting to be his before an interview took place.

I could not but acknowledge my ſenſe of his generoſity; but I told him I was wholly dependent upon you, and that I was certain your opinion would be the ſame as mine, which was, that it would be highly improper I ſhould diſpoſe of myſelf for ever, ſo very near the time which muſt finally decide by whoſe authority I ought to be guided. The ſubject of this dreaded meeting, with the thouſand conjectures and apprehenſions to which it gives birth, employed all our converſation then, as it has all my thoughts ſince.

Heaven only knows how I ſhall ſupport myſelf, when the long-expected,—the wiſhed,—yet terrible moment arrives, that will proſtrate me at the feet of the neareſt, the moſt reverenced of all relations, whom my heart yearns to know, and longs to love!

LETTER XVII.

Evelina, in continuation.

Oct. 9th.

I Could not write yeſterday, ſo violent was the agitation of my mind,—but I will not, now, loſe a moment till I have haſtened to my beſt friend an account of the tranſactions of a day I can never recollect without emotion.

Mrs. Selwyn determined upon ſending no meſſage, "Leſt," ſaid ſhe, "Sir John, fatigued with the very idea of my reproaches, ſhould endeavour to avoid a meeting: all we have to do, is to take him by ſurpriſe. He cannot but ſee who you are, whether he will do you juſtice or not."

We went early, and in Mrs. Beaumont's chariot; into which, Lord Orville, uttering words of the kindeſt encouragement, handed us both.

My uneaſineſs, during the ride, was exceſſive, but, when we ſtopped at the door, I was almoſt ſenſeleſs with terror! the meeting, at laſt, was not ſo dreadful as that moment! I believe I was carried into the houſe; but I ſcarce recollect what was done with me: however, I know we remained

mained ſome time in the parlour, before Mrs. Selwyn could ſend any meſſage up ſtairs.

When I was ſomewhat recovered, I entreated her to let me return home, aſſuring her I felt myſelf quite unequal to ſupporting the interview.

"No," ſaid ſhe, "you muſt ſtay now; your fears will but gain ſtrength by delay, and we muſt not have ſuch a ſhock as this repeated." Then, turning to the ſervant, ſhe ſent up her name.

An anſwer was brought, that he was going out in great haſte, but would attend her immediately. I turned ſo ſick, that Mrs. Selwyn was apprehenſive I ſhould have fainted; and opening a door which led to an inner apartment, ſhe begged me to wait there till I was ſomewhat compoſed, and till ſhe had prepared for my reception.

Glad of every moment's reprieve, I willingly agreed to the propoſal, and Mrs. Selwyn had but juſt time to ſhut me in, before her preſence was neceſſary.

The voice of a *father*—Oh dear and revered name!—which then, for the firſt time, ſtruck my ears, affected me in a manner I cannot deſcribe, though it was only employed in giving orders to a ſervant as he came down ſtairs.

Then, entering the parlour, I heard him

ſay, "I am ſorry, Madam, I made you wait, but I have an engagement which now calls me away: however, if you have any commands for me, I ſhall be glad of the honour of your company ſome other time."

"I am come, Sir," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "to introduce your daughter to you."

"I am infinitely obliged to you," anſwered he, "but I have juſt had the ſatisfaction of breakfaſting with her. Ma'am, your moſt obedient."

"You refuſe, then, to ſee her?"

"I am much indebted to you, Madam, for this deſire of encreaſing my family, but you muſt excuſe me if I decline taking advantage of it. I have already a daughter, to whom I owe every thing; and it is not three days ſince, that I had the pleaſure of diſcovering a ſon; how many more ſons and daughters may be brought to me, I am yet to learn, but I am, already, perfectly ſatisfied with the ſize of my family."

"Had you a thouſand children, Sir John," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, warmly, "this only one, of which Lady Belmont was the mother, ought to be moſt diſtinguiſhed; and, far from avoiding her ſight, you ſhould thank your ſtars, in humble gratitude, that there yet remains in your power the ſmalleſt opportunity of doing the injured

jured wife you have deſtroyed, the poor juſtice of acknowledging her child!"

"I am very unwilling, Madam," anſwered he, "to enter into any diſcuſſion of this point; but you are determined to compel me to ſpeak. There lives not, at this time, the human being who ſhould talk to *me* of the regret due to the memory of that ill-fated woman; no one can feel it ſo ſeverely as myſelf: but let me, nevertheleſs, aſſure you, I have already done all that remained in my power to prove the reſpect ſhe merited from me; her child I have educated and owned for my lawful heireſs; if, Madam, you can ſuggeſt to me any other means by which I may more fully do her juſtice, and more clearly manifeſt her innocence, name them to me, and though they ſhould wound my character ſtill deeper, I will perform them readily."

"All this ſounds vaſtly well," returned Mrs. Selwyn, "but I muſt own it is rather too enigmatical for *my* faculties of comprehenſion. You can, however, have no objection to ſeeing this young lady?"

"None in the world."

"Come forth, then, my dear," cried ſhe, opening the door, "come forth, and ſee your father!" Then, taking my trembling hand, ſhe led me forward. I would have withdrawn it, and retreated, but as

he advanced instantly towards me, I found myself already before him.

What a moment for your Evelina!—an involuntary scream escaped me, and, covering my face with my hands, I sunk on the floor.

He had, however, seen me first; for in a voice scarce articulate, he exclaimed, "My God! does Caroline Evelyn still live!"

Mrs. Selwyn said something, but I could not listen to her; and, in a few minutes, he added, "Lift up thy head,—if my sight has not blasted thee,—lift up thy head, thou image of my long lost Caroline!"

Affected beyond measure, I half arose, and embraced his knees, while yet on my own.

"Yes, yes," cried he, looking earnestly in my face, "I see, I see thou art her child! she lives—she breathes—she is present to my view!—Oh God, that she indeed lived!—Go, child, go," added he, wildly starting, and pushing me from him, "take her away, Madam,—I cannot bear to look at her!" And then, breaking hastily from me, he rushed out of the room.

Speechless, motionless myself, I attempted not to stop him: but Mrs. Selwyn, hastening after him, caught hold of his arm, "Leave me, Madam," cried he, with quickness, "and take care of the poor child;

child;—bid her not think me unkind, tell her I would at this moment plunge a dagger in my heart to ſerve her,—but ſhe has ſet my brain on fire, and I can ſee her no more!" Then, with a violence almoſt frantic, he ran up ſtairs.

Oh Sir, had I not indeed cauſe to dread this interview?—an interview ſo unſpeakably painful and afflicting to us both! Mrs. Selwyn would have immediately returned to Clifton; but I entreated her to wait ſome time, in the hope that my unhappy father, when his firſt emotion was over, would again bear me in his ſight. However, he ſoon after ſent his ſervant to enquire how I did, and to tell Mrs. Selwyn he was much indiſpoſed, but would hope for the honour of ſeeing her to-morrow, at any time ſhe would pleaſe to appoint.

She fixed upon ten o'clock in the morning; and then, with a heavy heart, I got into the chariot. Thoſe afflicting words, *I can ſee her no more*, were never a moment abſent from my mind.

Yet the ſight of Lord Orville, who handed us from the carriage, gave ſome relief to the ſadneſs of my thoughts. I could not, however, enter upon the painful ſubject, but begging Mrs. Selwyn to ſatisfy him, I went to my own room.

As ſoon as I communicated to the good

Mrs. Clinton the preſent ſituation of my affairs, an idea occurred to her, which ſeemed to clear up all the myſtery of my having been ſo long diſowned.

The woman, ſhe ſays, who attended my ever-to-be-regretted mother in her laſt illneſs, and who nurſed me the firſt four months of my life, ſoon after being diſcharged from your houſe, left Berry Hill entirely, with her baby, who was but ſix weeks older than myſelf. Mrs. Clinton remembers, that her quitting the place appeared, at the time, very extraordinary to the neighbours, but, as ſhe was never heard of afterwards, ſhe was, by degrees, quite forgotten.

The moment this was mentioned, it ſtruck Mrs. Selwyn, as well as Mrs. Clinton herſelf, that my father had been impoſed upon, and that the nurſe who ſaid ſhe had brought his child to him, had, in fact, carried her own.

The name by which I was known, the ſecrecy obſerved in regard to my family, and the retirement in which I lived, all conſpired to render this ſcheme, however daring and fraudulent, by no means impracticable, and, in ſhort, the idea was no ſooner ſtarted, than conviction ſeemed to follow it.

Mrs. Selwyn determined immediately to diſcover

diſcover the truth or miſtake of this conjecture; therefore, the moment ſhe had dined, ſhe walked to the Hotwells, attended by Mrs. Clinton.

I waited in my room till her return, and then heard the following account of her viſit:

She found my poor father in great agitation. She immediately informed him of the occaſion of her ſo ſpeedy return, and of her ſuſpicions of the woman who had pretended to convey to him his child. Interrupting her with quickneſs, he ſaid he had juſt ſent her from his preſence: that the certainty I carried in my countenance, of my real birth, made him, the moment he had recovered from a ſurpriſe which had almoſt deprived him of reaſon, ſuſpect, himſelf, the impoſition ſhe mentioned. He had, therefore, ſent for the woman, and queſtioned her with the utmoſt auſterity: ſhe turned pale, and was extremely embarraſſed, but ſtill ſhe perſiſted in affirming, that ſhe had really brought him the daughter of Lady Belmont. His perplexity, he ſaid, almoſt diſtracted him; he had *always* obſerved, that his daughter bore no reſemblance to either of her parents, but, as he had never doubted the veracity of the nurſe, this circumſtance did not give birth to any ſuſpicion.

At Mrs. Selwyn's desire, the woman was again called, and interrogated with equal art and severity; her confusion was evident, and her answers often contradictory, yet she still declared she was no impostor. "We will see that in a minute," said Mrs. Selwyn, and then desired Mrs. Clinton might be called up stairs. The poor wretch, changing colour, would have escaped out of the room, but, being prevented, dropt on her knees, and implored forgiveness. A confession of the whole affair was then extorted from her.

Doubtless, my dear Sir, you must remember *Dame Green*, who was my first nurse. The deceit she has practised, was suggested, she says, by a conversation she overheard, in which my unhappy mother besought you, that, if her child survived her, you would take the sole care of its education; and, in particular, if it should be a female, you would by no means part with her in early life. You not only consented, she says, but assured her you would even retire abroad with me yourself, if my father should importunately demand me. Her own child, she said, was then in her arms, and she could not forbear wishing it were possible to give *her* the fortune which seemed so little valued for me. This wish once raised, was not easily suppressed; on

the contrary, what at firſt appeared a mere idle deſire, in a ſhort time ſeemed a feaſible ſcheme. Her huſband was dead, and ſhe had little regard for any body but her child; and, in ſhort, having ſaved money for the journey, ſhe contrived to enquire a direction to my father, and telling her neighbours ſhe was going to ſettle in Devonſhire, ſhe ſet out on her expedition.

When Mrs. Selwyn aſked her, how ſhe dared perpetrate ſuch a fraud, ſhe proteſted ſhe had no ill deſigns, but that, as *Miſs* would be never the worſe for it, ſhe thought it pity *nobody* ſhould be the better.

Her ſucceſs we are already acquainted with. Indeed every thing ſeemed to contribute towards it: my father had no correſpondent at Berry Hill, the child was inſtantly ſent to France, where being brought up in as much retirement as myſelf, nothing but accident could diſcover the fraud.

And here, let me indulge myſelf in obſerving, and rejoicing to obſerve, that the total neglect I thought I met with was not the effect of inſenſibility or unkindneſs, but of impoſition and error; and that at the very time we concluded I was unnaturally rejected, my deluded father meant to ſhew me moſt favour and protection.

He acknowledges that Lady Howard's

letter ſlung him into ſome perplexity; he immediately communicated it to Dame Green, who confeſſed it was the greateſt ſhock ſhe had ever received in her life; yet ſhe had the art and boldneſs to aſſert, that Lady Howard muſt herſelf have been deceived: and as ſhe had, from the beginning of her enterprize, declared ſhe had ſtolen away the child without your knowledge, he concluded that ſome deceit was *then* intended him; and this thought occaſioned his abrupt anſwer.

Dame Green owned, that from the moment the journey to England was ſettled, ſhe gave herſelf up for loſt. All her hope was to have had her daughter married before it took place, for which reaſon ſhe had ſo much promoted Mr. Macartney's addreſſes: for though ſuch a match was inadequate to the pretenſions of *Miſs Belmont*, ſhe well knew it was far ſuperior to thoſe *her daughter* could form, after the diſcovery of her birth.

My firſt enquiry was, if this innocent daughter was yet acquainted with the affair? No, Mrs. Selwyn ſaid, nor was any plan ſettled how to divulge it to her. Poor unfortunate girl! how hard is her fate! She is entitled to my kindeſt offices, and I ſhall always conſider her as my ſiſter.

I then

I then aſked whether my father would again allow me to ſee him?

"Why no, my dear, not yet," anſwered ſhe; "he declares the ſight of you is too much for him: however, we are to ſettle every thing concerning you to-morrow, for this woman took up all our time to-day."

This morning, therefore, ſhe is again gone to the Hotwell. I am waiting in all impatience for her return; but as I know you will be anxious for the account this letter contains, I will not delay ſending it.

LETTER XVIII.

Evelina in continuation.

Oct. 9th.

HOW agitated, my dear Sir, is the preſent life of your Evelina! every day ſeems important, and one event only a prelude to another.

Mrs. Selwyn, upon her return this morning from the Hotwell, entering my room very abruptly, ſaid, "Oh my dear, I have terrible news for you!"

"For me, Ma'am!—Good God! what now?"

"Arm yourſelf," cried ſhe, "with all your

your Berry Hill philoſophy,—con over every leſſon of fortitude or reſignation you ever learnt in your life,—for know,—you are next week to be married to Lord Orville!"

Doubt, aſtoniſhment, and a kind of perturbation I cannot deſcribe, made this abrupt communication alarm me extremely, and, almoſt breathleſs, I could only exclaim, "Good God, Madam, what do you tell me?"

"You may well be frightened, my dear," ſaid ſhe, ironically, for really there is ſomething mighty terrific, in becoming, at once, the wife of the man you adore,—and a Counteſs!"

I entreated her to ſpare her raillery, and tell me her real meaning. She could not prevail with herſelf to grant the *firſt* requeſt, though ſhe readily complied with the ſecond.

My poor father, ſhe ſaid, was ſtill in the utmoſt uneaſineſs. He entered upon his affairs with great openneſs, and told her he was equally diſturbed how to diſpoſe either of the daughter he had diſcovered, or the daughter he was now to give up; the former he dreaded to truſt himſelf with again beholding, and the latter he knew not how to ſhock with the intelligence of her diſgrace. Mrs. Selwyn then acquainted him with

with my ſituation in regard to Lord Orville; this delighted him extremely, and, when he heard of his Lordſhip's eagerneſs, he ſaid he was himſelf of opinion, the ſooner the union took place the better: and, in return, he informed her of the affair of Mr. Macartney. "And, after a very long converſation," continued Mrs. Selwyn, "we agreed, that the moſt eligible ſcheme for all parties would be to have both the real and the fictitious daughter married without delay. Therefore, if either of you have any inclination to pull caps for the title of Miſs Belmont, you muſt do it with all ſpeed, as next week will take from both of you all pretenſions to it."

"Next week!—dear Madam, what a ſtrange plan!—without my being conſulted—without applying to Mr. Villars,—without even the concurrence of Lord Orville!"

"As to conſulting *you*, my dear, it was out of all queſtion, becauſe, you know, young ladies' hearts and hands are always to be given with reluctance;—as to Mr. Villars, it is ſufficient we know him for your friend;—and as for Lord Orville, he is a party concerned."

"A party concerned!—you amaze me!"

"Why, yes; for as I found our conſultation

ration likely to redound to his advantage, I perſuaded Sir John to ſend for him."

"Send for him!—Good God!"

"Yes, and Sir John agreed. I told the ſervant, that if he could not hear of his Lordſhip in the houſe, he might be pretty certain of encountering him in the arbour. —Why do you colour, my dear?—Well, he was with us in a moment; I introduced him to Sir John, and we proceeded to buſineſs."

"I am very, very ſorry for it!—Lord Orville muſt, himſelf, think this conduct ſtrangely precipitate."

"No, my dear, you are miſtaken, Lord Orville has too much good ſenſe. Every thing was then diſcuſſed in a rational manner. You are to be married privately, though not ſecretly, and then go to one of his Lordſhip's country ſeats: and poor little Miſs Green and your brother, who have no houſe of their own, muſt go to one of Sir John's."

"But why, my dear Madam, why all this haſte? why may we not be allowed a little longer time?"

"I could give you a thouſand reaſons," anſwered ſhe, "but that I am tolerably certain *two* or *three* will be more than you can controvert, even with all the logic of genuine coquetry. In the firſt place, you

doubtleſs wiſh to quit the houſe of Mrs. Beaumont,—to whoſe, then, can you with ſuch propriety remove, as to Lord Orville's?"

"Surely, Madam," cried I, "I am not more deſtitute now, than when I thought myſelf an orphan?"

"Your father, my dear," anſwered ſhe, "is willing to ſave the little impoſtor as much of the mortification of her diſgrace as is in his power: now if you immediately take her place, according to your right, as Miſs Belmont, why not all that either of you can do for her, will prevent her being eternally ſtigmatized, as the Bantling of Dame Green, waſh-woman and wet nurſe of Berry Hill, Dorſetſhire. Now ſuch a genealogy will not be very flattering, even to Mr. Macartney, who, all-diſmal as he is, you will find by no means wanting in pride and ſelf-conſequence."

"For the univerſe," interrupted I, "I would not be acceſſary to the degradation you mention; but, ſurely, Madam, I may return to Berry Hill?"

"By no means," ſaid ſhe; "for though compaſſion may make us wiſh to ſave the poor girl the confuſion of an immediate and public fall, yet juſtice demands you ſhould appear, henceforward, in no other light than that of Sir John Belmont's daughter. Beſides, between friends, I, who know the world,

world, can ſee that half this prodigious delicacy for the little uſurper, is the mere reſult of ſelf-intereſt; for while *her* affairs are huſht up, Sir John's, you know, are kept from being brought further to light. Now the double marriage we have projected, obviates all rational objections. Sir John will give you, immediately, £.30,000; all ſettlements, and ſo forth, will be made for you in the name of Evelina Belmont;—Mr. Macartney will, at the ſame time, take poor Polly Green;—and yet, at firſt, it will only be generally known that *a daughter of Sir John Belmont's* is married."

In this manner, though ſhe did not convince me, yet the quickneſs of her arguments ſilenced and perplexed me. I enquired, however, if I might not be permitted to again ſee my father, or whether I muſt regard myſelf as baniſhed his preſence for ever?

"My dear," ſaid ſhe, "he does not know you; he concludes that you have been brought up to deteſt him, and therefore he is rather prepared to dread, than to love you."

This anſwer made me very unhappy; I wiſhed, moſt impatiently, to remove his prejudice, and endeavour, by dutiful aſſiduity, to engage his kindneſs, yet knew not how to propoſe ſeeing him, while conſcious he wiſhed to avoid me.

This

This evening, as ſoon as the company was engaged with cards, Lord Orville exerted his utmoſt eloquence to reconcile me to this haſty plan: but how was I ſtartled, when he told me that next *Tueſday* was the day appointed by my father to be the moſt important of my life!

"Next Tueſday!" repeated I, quite out of breath, "Oh my Lord!—"

"My ſweet Evelina," ſaid he, "the day which will make me the happieſt of mortals, would probably appear awful to you, were it to be deferred a twelvemonth: Mrs. Selwyn has, doubtleſs, acquainted you with the many motives which, independent of my eagerneſs, require it to be ſpeedy; ſuffer, therefore, its acceleration, and generouſly complete my felicity, by endeavouring to ſuffer it without repugnance."

"Indeed, my Lord, I would not wilfully raiſe objections, nor do I deſire to appear inſenſible of the honour of your good opinion;—but there is ſomething in this plan, ſo very haſty,—ſo unreaſonably precipitate,—beſides, I ſhall have no time to hear from Berry Hill,—and believe me, my Lord, I ſhould be for ever miſerable, were I, in an affair ſo important, to act without the ſanction of Mr. Villars' advice."

He offered to wait on you himſelf; but I told him I had rather write to you. And then he propoſed, that, inſtead of my immediately

diately accompanying him to Lincolnſhire, we ſhould, firſt, paſs a month *at my native Berry Hill.*

This was, indeed, a grateful propoſal to me, and I liſtened to it with undiſguiſed pleaſure. And,—in ſhort, I was obliged to conſent to a compromiſe, in merely deferring the day till Thurſday! He readily undertook to engage my father's concurrence in this little delay, and I beſought him, at the ſame time, to make uſe of his influence to obtain me a ſecond interview, and to repreſent the deep concern I felt in being thus baniſhed his ſight.

He would then have ſpoken of *ſettlements*, but I aſſured him, I was almoſt ignorant even of the word.

And now, my deareſt Sir, what is your opinion of theſe haſty proceedings? believe me, I half regret the ſimple facility with which I have ſuffered myſelf to be hurried into compliance; and, ſhould you ſtart but the ſmalleſt objection, I will yet inſiſt upon being allowed more time.

I muſt now write a conciſe account of the ſtate of my affairs to Howard Grove, and to Madame Duval.

Adieu, deareſt and moſt honoured Sir! every thing, at preſent, depends upon your ſingle deciſion, to which, though I yield in trembling, I yield implicitly.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

Evelina in continuation.

Oct. 11.

YESTERDAY morning, as ſoon as breakfaſt was over, Lord Orville went to the Hotwells, to wait upon my father with my double petition.

Mrs. Beaumont then, in general terms, propoſed a walk in the garden. Mrs. Selwyn ſaid ſhe had letters to write, but Lady Louiſa aroſe to accompany her.

I had had ſome reaſon to imagine, from the notice with which her Ladyſhip had honoured me during breakfaſt, that her brother had acquainted her with my preſent ſituation: and her behaviour now confirmed my conjecture; for, when I would have gone up ſtairs, inſtead of ſuffering me, as uſual, to paſs diſregarded, ſhe called after me with an affected ſurpriſe, "Miſs Anville, don't you walk with us?"

There ſeemed ſomething ſo little-minded in this ſudden change of conduct, that, from an involuntary motion of contempt, I thanked her, with a coldneſs like her own, and declined her offer. Yet, obſerving that ſhe bluſhed extremely at my refuſal, and recollecting

recollecting ſhe was ſiſter to Lord Orville, my indignation ſubſided, and upon Mrs. Beaumont's repeating the invitation, I accepted it.

Our walk proved extremely dull; Mrs. Beaumont, who never ſays much, was more ſilent than uſual; Lady Louiſa ſtrove in vain to lay aſide the reſtraint and diſtance ſhe has hitherto preſerved; and as to me, I was too conſcious of the circumſtances to which I owed their attention, to feel either pride or pleaſure from receiving it.

Lord Orville was not long abſent; he joined us in the garden with a look of gaiety and good-humour that revived us all. "You are juſt the party," ſaid he, "I wiſhed to ſee together. Will you, Madam," taking my hand, "allow me the honour of introducing you, by your real name, to two of my neareſt relations? Mrs. Beaumont, give me leave to preſent to you the daughter of Sir John Belmont, a young lady who, I am ſure, muſt long ſince have engaged your eſteem and admiration, though you were a ſtranger to her birth."

"My Lord," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont, graciouſly ſaluting me, "the young lady's rank in life,—your Lordſhip's recommendation,—or her own merit, would any one of them have been ſufficient to have entitled her to my regard; and I hope ſhe has al-

ways

ways met with that reſpect in my houſe which is ſo much her due; though, had I been ſooner made acquainted with her family, I ſhould, doubtleſs, have better known how to have ſecured it."

"Miſs Belmont," ſaid Lord Orville, "can receive no luſtre from family, whatever ſhe may give to it. Louiſa, you will, I am ſure, be happy to make yourſelf an intereſt in the friendſhip of Miſs Belmont, whom I hope ſhortly," kiſſing my hand, and joining it with her Ladyſhip's, "to have the happineſs of preſenting to you by yet another name, and by the moſt endearing of all titles."

I believe it would be difficult to ſay whoſe cheeks were, at that moment, of the deepeſt dye, Lady Louiſa's or my own; for the conſcious pride with which ſhe has hitherto ſlighted me, gave to her an embarraſſment which equalled the confuſion that an introduction ſo unexpected gave to me. She ſaluted me, however, and, with a faint ſmile, ſaid, "I ſhall eſteem myſelf very happy to profit by the honour of Miſs Belmont's acquaintance."

I only courtſied, and we walked on; but it was evident, from the little ſurpriſe they expreſſed, that they had been already informed of the ſtate of the affair.

We were, ſoon after, joined by more company:

company; and Lord Orville then, in a low voice, took an opportunity to tell me the ſucceſs of his viſit. In the firſt place, Thurſday was agreed to; and, in the ſecond, my father, he ſaid, was much concerned to hear of my uneaſineſs, ſent me his bleſſing, and complied with my requeſt of ſeeing him, with the ſame readineſs he ſhould agree to any other I could make. Lord Orville, therefore, ſettled that I ſhould wait upon him in the evening, and, at his particular requeſt, unaccompanied by Mrs. Selwyn.

This kind meſſage, and the proſpect of ſo ſoon ſeeing him, gave me ſenſations of mixed pleaſure and pain, which wholly occupied my mind till the time of my going to the Hotwell.

Mrs. Beaumont lent me her chariot, and Lord Orville abſolutely inſiſted upon attending me. "If you go alone," ſaid he, "Mrs. Selwyn will certainly be offended; but, if you allow me to conduct you, though ſhe may give the freer ſcope to her raillery, ſhe cannot poſſibly be affronted: and we had much better ſuffer her laughter, than provoke her ſatire."

Indeed, I muſt own I had no reaſon to regret being ſo accompanied; for his converſation ſupported my ſpirits from drooping, and made the ride ſeem ſo ſhort, that we

we actually ſtopt at my father's door, before I knew we had proceeded ten yards.

He handed me from the carriage, and conducted me to the parlour, at the door of which I was met by Mr. Macartney. "Ah, my dear brother," cried I, "how happy am I to ſee you here!"

He bowed and thanked me. Lord Orville, then, holding out his hand, ſaid, "Mr. Macartney, I hope we ſhall be better acquainted; I promiſe myſelf much pleaſure from cultivating your friendſhip."

"Your Lordſhip does me but too much honour," anſwered Mr. Macartney.

"But where," cried I, "is my ſiſter? for ſo I muſt already call, and always conſider her:—I am afraid ſhe avoids me;—you muſt endeavour, my dear brother, to prepoſſeſs her in my favour, and reconcile her to owning me."

"Oh Madam," cried he, "you are all goodneſs and benevolence! but at preſent I hope you will excuſe her, for I fear ſhe has hardly fortitude ſufficient to ſee you: in a ſhort time, perhaps——"

"In a *very* ſhort time, then," ſaid Lord Orville, "I hope you will yourſelf introduce her, and that we ſhall have the pleaſure of wiſhing you both joy: allow me, my Evelina, to ſay *we*, and permit me, in your name as well as my own, to entreat

that the first guests we shall have the happiness of receiving, may be Mr. and Mrs. Macartney."

A servant then came to beg I would walk up stairs.

I besought Lord Orville to accompany me; but he feared the displeasure of Sir John, who had desired to see me alone. He led me, however, to the foot of the stairs, and made the kindest efforts to give me courage; but indeed he did not succeed, for the interview appeared to me in all its terrors, and left me no feeling but apprehension.

The moment I reached the landing-place, the drawing-room door was opened, and my father, with a voice of kindness, called out, "My child, is it you?"

"Yes, Sir," cried I, springing forward, and kneeling at his feet, "it is your child, if you will own her!"

He knelt by my side, and folding me in his arms, "Own thee," repeated he, "yes, my poor girl, and Heaven knows with what bitter contrition!" Then raising both himself and me, he brought me into the drawing-room, shut the door, and took me to the window, where, looking at me with great earnestness, "Poor unhappy Caroline!" cried he, and, to my inexpressible concern, he burst into tears. Need I tell you,

you, my dear Sir, how mine flowed at the ſight?

I would again have embraced his knees; but, hurrying from me, he flung himſelf upon a ſopha, and, leaning his face on his arms, ſeemed, for ſome time, abſorbed in bitterneſs of grief.

I ventured not to interrupt a ſorrow I ſo much reſpected, but waited in ſilence, and at a diſtance, till he recovered from its violence. But then it ſeemed, in a moment, to give way to a kind of frantic fury; for, ſtarting ſuddenly, with a ſternneſs which at once ſurpriſed and frightened me: "Child," cried he, "haſt thou yet ſufficiently humbled thy father?—if thou haſt, be contented with this proof of my weakneſs, and no longer force thyſelf into my preſence!"

I thunderſtruck by a command ſo unexpected, I ſtood ſtill, and ſpeechleſs, and doubted whether my own ears did not deceive me.

"Oh, go, go!" cried he, paſſionately, "in pity—in compaſſion,—if thou valueſt my ſenſes, leave me,—and for ever!"

"I will, I will," cried I, greatly terrified; and I moved haſtily towards the door: yet ſtopping when I reached it, and, almoſt involuntarily, dropping on my knees, "Vouchſafe," cried I, "oh, Sir,

vouchſafe but once to bleſs your daughter, and her ſight ſhall never more offend you!"

"Alas," cried he, in a ſoftened voice, "I am not worthy to bleſs thee!—I am not worthy to call thee daughter!—I am not worthy that the fair light of heaven ſhould viſit my eyes!—Oh God! that I could but call back the time ere thou waſt born,—or elſe bury its remembrance in eternal oblivion!"

"Would to Heaven," cried I, "that the ſight of me were leſs terrible to you! that inſtead of irritating, I could ſoothe your ſorrows!—Oh Sir, how thankfully would I then prove my duty, even at the hazard of my life!"

"Are you ſo kind?" cried he, gently; "come hither, child,—riſe, Evelina;—alas, it is for *me* to kneel, not you—and I *would* kneel,—I would crawl upon the earth,—I would kiſs the duſt,—could I, by ſuch ſubmiſſion, obtain the forgiveneſs of the repreſentative of the moſt injured of women!"

"Oh, Sir," exclaimed I, "that you could but read my heart!—that you could but ſee the filial tenderneſs and concern with which it overflows!—you would not then talk thus,—you would not then banniſh me your preſence, and exclude me from your affection!"

"Good God," cried he, "is it then possible that you do not hate me?—Can the child of the wronged Caroline look at,—and not execrate me? Wast thou not born to abhor, and bred to curse me? did not thy mother bequeath thee her blessing, on condition that thou shouldst detest and avoid me?"

"Oh no, no, no!" cried I, "think not so unkindly of her, nor so hardly of me." I then took from my pocket-book her last letter, and, pressing it to my lips, with a trembling hand, and still upon my knees, I held it out to him.

Hastily snatching it from me, "Great Heaven!" cried he, "'tis her writing—Whence comes this?—who gave it you?—why had I it not sooner?"

I made no answer; his vehemence intimidated me, and I ventured not to move from the suppliant posture in which I had put myself.

He went from me to the window, where his eyes were for some time rivetted upon the direction of the letter, though his hand shook so violently he could hardly hold it. Then, bringing it to me, "Open it,"—cried he,—"for I cannot!"

I had, myself, hardly strength to obey him; but, when I had, he took it back, and walked hastily up and down the room,

as if dreading to read it. At length, turning to me, "Do you know," cried he, "its contents?"

"No, Sir," answered I, "it has never been unsealed."

He then again went to the window, and began reading. Having haſtily run it over, he caſt up his eyes with a look of deſperation; the letter fell from his hand, and he exclaimed, "Yes! thou art ſainted!—thou art bleſſed!—and I am curſed for ever!" He continued ſome time fixed in this melancholy poſition; after which, caſting himſelf with violence upon the ground, "Oh, wretch," cried he, "unworthy life and light, in what dungeon canſt thou hide thy head?"

I could reſtrain myſelf no longer; I roſe and went to him; I did not dare ſpeak, but with pity and concern unutterable, I wept and hung over him.

Soon after, ſtarting up, he again ſeized the letter, exclaiming, "Acknowledge thee, Caroline!—yes, with my heart's beſt blood would I acknowledge thee!—Oh that thou couldſt witneſs the agony of my ſoul!—Ten thouſand daggers could not have wounded me like this letter!"

Then, after again reading it, "Evelina," he cried, "ſhe charges me to receive thee; wilt thou, in obedience to her will, own

for

for thy father the deſtroyer of thy mother?"

What a dreadful queſtion! I ſhuddered, but could not ſpeak.

"To clear her fame, and receive her child," continued he, looking ſtedfaſtly at the letter, "are the conditions upon which ſhe leaves me her forgiveneſs: her fame, I have already cleared;—and oh how willingly would I take her child to my boſom,—fold her to my heart,—call upon her to mitigate my anguiſh, and pour the balm of comfort on my wounds, were I not conſcious I deſerve not to receive it, and that all my affliction is the reſult of my own guilt!"

It was in vain I attempted to ſpeak; horror and grief took from me all power of utterance.

He then read aloud from the letter, "*Look not like thy unfortunate mother!*—Sweet ſoul, with what bitterneſs of ſpirit haſt thou written!—Come hither, Evelina: Gracious Heaven!" looking earneſtly at me, never was likeneſs more ſtriking!—the eye,—the face,—the form,—Oh my child, my child!—Imagine, Sir,—for I can never deſcribe my feelings, when I ſaw him ſink upon his Knees before me! "Oh dear reſemblance of thy murdered mother!—Oh all that remains of the moſt injured of wo-

men! behold thy father at thy feet!—bending thus lowly to implore you would not hate him.—Oh then, thou representative of my departed wife, speak to me in her name, and say that the remorse which tears my soul, tortures me not in vain!

"Oh rise, rise, my beloved father!" cried I, attempting to assist him, "I cannot bear to see you thus;—reverse not the law of nature, rise yourself, and bless your kneeling daughter!"

"May Heaven bless thee, my child!—" cried he, "for I dare not." He then rose, and embracing me most affectionately, added, "I see, I see that thou art all kindness, softness, and tenderness; I need not have feared thee, thou art all the fondest father could wish, and I will try to frame my mind to less painful sensations at thy sight. Perhaps the time may come when I may know the comfort of such a daughter,—at present, I am only fit to be alone: dreadful as are my reflections, they ought merely to torment myself.—Adieu, my child;—be not angry,—I cannot stay with thee,—oh Evelina! thy countenance is a dagger to my heart!—just so thy mother looked,—just so—"

Tears and sighs seemed to choak him!—and waving his hand, he would have left me,—but, clinging to him, "Oh, Sir," cried

cried I, "will you so soon abandon me? —am I again an orphan?—oh my dear, my long-lost father, leave me not, I beseech you! take pity on your child, and rob her not of the parent she so fondly hoped would cherish her!"

"You know not what you ask," cried he; "the emotions which now rend my soul are more than my reason can endure: suffer me, then, to leave you,—impute it not to unkindness, but think of me as well as thou canst.—Lord Orville has behaved nobly;—I believe he will make thee happy." Then, again embracing me, "God bless thee, my dear child," cried he, "God bless thee, my Evelina!—endeavour to love,—at least not to hate me,—and to make me an interest in thy filial bosom by thinking of me as thy father."

I could not speak; I kissed his hands on my knees; and then, with yet more emotion, he again blessed me, and hurried out of the room,—leaving me almost drowned in tears.

Oh Sir, all goodness as you are, how much will you feel for your Evelina, during a scene of such agitation! I pray Heaven to accept the tribute of his remorse, and restore him to tranquillity!

When I was sufficiently composed to return to the parlour, I found Lord Orville

waiting for me with the utmoſt anxiety:—and then a new ſcene of emotion, though of a far different nature, awaited me; for I learnt, by Mr. Macartney, that this nobleſt of men had inſiſted the ſo-long ſuppoſed Miſs Belmont ſhould be conſidered *indeed* as my ſiſter, and as the co-heireſs of my father! though not in *law*, in *juſtice*, he ſays, ſhe ought ever to be treated as the daughter of Sir John Belmont.

Oh Lord Orville!—it ſhall be the ſole ſtudy of my happy life, to expreſs, better than by words, the ſenſe I have of your exalted benevolence, and greatneſs of mind!

LETTER XX.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, Oct. 12th.

THIS morning, early, I received the following letter from Sir Clement Willoughby.

To Miss Anville.

I Have this moment received intelligence that preparations are actually making for your marriage with Lord Orville.

Imagine not that I write with the imbecile idea of rendering those preparations abortive. No, I am not so mad. My sole view is to explain the motive of my conduct in a particular instance, and to obviate the accusation of treachery which may be laid to my charge.

My unguarded behaviour when I last saw you, has, probably, already acquainted you, that the letter I then saw you reading was written by myself. For your further satisfaction, let me have the honour of informing you, that the letter you had designed for Lord Orville, had fallen into my hands.

However I may have been urged on by a passion the most violent that ever warmed the heart of man, I can by no means calmly submit to be stigmatised for an action seemingly so dishonourable; and it is for this reason that I trouble you with my justification.

Lord Orville,—the happy Orville, whom you are so ready to bless,—had made me

believe he loved you not,—nay, that he held you in contempt.

Such were my thoughts of his sentiments of you, when I got possession of the letter you meant to send him. I pretend not to vindicate either the means I used to obtain it, or the action of breaking the seal;—but I was impelled by an impetuous curiosity to discover the terms upon which you wrote to him.

The letter, however, was wholly unintelligible to me, and the perusal of it only added to my perplexity.

A tame suspense I was not born to endure, and I determined to clear my doubts at all hazards and events.

I answered it, therefore, in Orville's name.

The views, which I am now going to acknowledge, must, infallibly, incur your displeasure,—yet I scorn all palliation.

Briefly, then,—I concealed your letter to prevent a discovery of your capacity,—and I wrote you an answer which I hoped would prevent your wishing for any other.

I am well aware of every thing which can be said upon this subject. Lord Orville will, possibly, think himself ill used;—but I am extremely indifferent as to his opinion, nor do I now write by way of offering any apology to him, but merely to make known

to

to yourself the reasons by which I have been governed.

I intend to set off next week for the Continent. Should his Lordship have any commands for me in the mean time, I shall be glad to receive them. I say not this by way of defiance,—I should blush to be suspected of so doing through an indirect channel,—but simply that, if you shew him this letter, he may know I dare defend, as well as excuse my conduct.

CLEMENT WILLOUGHBY.

What a strange letter! how proud and how piqued does its writer appear! To what alternate *meanness* and *rashness* do the passions lead, when reason and self-denial do not oppose them! Sir Clement is conscious he has acted dishonourably, yet the same unbridled vehemence which urged him to gratify a blameable curiosity, will sooner prompt him to risk his life, than confess his misconduct. The rudeness of his manner of writing to me springs from the same cause: the proof he has received of my indifference to him, has stung him to the soul, and he has neither the delicacy nor forbearance to disguise his displeasure.

I determined not to shew this letter to Lord Orville, and thought it most prudent

to

to let Sir Clement know I should not. I therefore wrote the following note:

To Sir Clement Willoughby.

Sir,

THE letter you have been pleased to address to me, is so little calculated to afford Lord Orville any satisfaction, that you may depend upon my carefully keeping it from his sight. I will bear you no resentment for what is past; but I most earnestly entreat, nay implore, that you will not write again, while in your present frame of mind, by *any* channel, direct or indirect.

I hope you will have much pleasure in your propoſed expedition, and I beg leave to assure you of my good wishes.

Not knowing by what name to sign, I was obliged to send it without any.

The *preparations* which Sir Clement mentions, go on just as if your consent were arrived: it is in vain that I expostulate; Lord Orville says, should any objections be raised, all shall be given up, but that, as his hopes forbid him to expect

any, he muſt proceed as if already aſſured of your concurrence.

We have had, this afternoon, a moſt intereſting converſation, in which we have traced out ſentiments of each other from our firſt acquaintance. I have made him confeſs how ill he thought of me, upon my fooliſh giddineſs at Mrs. Stanley's ball; but he flatters me with aſſurances, that every ſucceeding time he ſaw me, I appeared to ſomething leſs and leſs diſadvantage.

When I expreſſed my amazement that he could honour with his choice a girl who ſeemed ſo infinitely, in *every* reſpect, beneath his alliance, he frankly owned, that he had fully intended making more minute enquiries into my family and connections, and particularly concerning *thoſe people* he ſaw me with at Marybone, before he acknowledged his prepoſſeſſion in my favour; but the ſuddenneſs of my intended journey, and the uncertainty of ſeeing me again, put him quite off his guard, and, "diveſting him of prudence, left him nothing but love." Theſe were his words; and yet, he has repeatedly aſſured me, that his partiality has known no bounds from the time of my reſiding at Clifton.

* * * * *

Mr.

Mr. Macartney has just been with me, on an embassy from my father. He has sent me his kindest love, and assurances of favour, and desired to know if I am happy in the prospect of changing my situation, and if there is any thing in his name which he can do for me. And, at the same time, Mr. Macartney delivered to me a draught on my father's banker for a thousand pounds, which he insisted that I should receive entirely for my own use, and expend in equipping myself properly for the new rank of life to which I seem destined.

I am sure I need not say how much I was penetrated by this goodness; I wrote my thanks, and acknowledged, frankly, that if I could see *him* restored to tranquillity, my heart would be without a wish.

LETTER XXI.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, Oct. 13.

THE time approaches now, when I hope we shall meet,—yet I cannot sleep,—great joy is as restless as sorrow,—and therefore I will continue my journal.

As

As I had never had an opportunity of seeing Bath, a party was formed last night for shewing me that celebrated city; and this morning, after breakfast, we set out in three phaetons, Lady Louisa and Mrs. Beaumont with Lord Merton; Mr. Coverley with Mrs. Selwyn; and Mrs. Selwyn and myself with Lord Orville.

We had hardly proceeded half a mile, when a gentleman from a post-chaise, which came galloping after us, called out to the servants, "Holla, my Lads,—pray is one Miss Anville in any of them *thing-em-bobs*?"

I immediately recollected the voice of Captain Mirvan, and Lord Orville stopt the phaeton. He was out of the chaise, and with us in a moment. "So, Miss Anville," cried he, "how do you do? so I hear you're Miss Belmont now;—pray how does old Madame French do?"

"Madame Duval," said I, "is, I believe, very well."

"I hope she is in *good case*," said he, winking significantly, "and won't flinch at seeing service: she has laid by long enough to refit and be made tight. And pray how does poor *Monseer* Doleful do? is he as lank-jawed as ever?"

"They are neither of them," said I, "in Bristol."

"No!

"No!" cried he, with a look of diſappointment, "but ſurely the old dowager intends coming to the wedding! 'twill be a moſt excellent opportunity to ſhew off her beſt Lyons ſilk. Beſides, I purpoſe to dance a new-faſhioned jig with her. Don't you know when ſhe'll come?"

"I have no reaſon to expect her at all."

"No!—Fore George, this here's the worſt news I'd wiſh to hear!—why I've thought of nothing all the way but what trick I ſhould ſerve her!"

"You have been very obliging!" ſaid I, laughing.

"O, I promiſe you," cried he, "our Moll would never have wheedled me into this jaunt, if I'd known ſhe was not here; for, to let you into the ſecret, I fully intended to have treated the old buck with another frolic."

"Did Miſs Mirvan, then, perſuade you to this journey?"

"Yes, and we've been travelling all night."

"*We!*" cried I: "Is Miſs Mirvan, then, with you?"

"What, Molly?—yes, ſhe's in that there chaiſe."

"Good God, Sir, why did not you tell me ſooner?" cried I; and immediately, with

Lord

Lord Orville's assistance, I jumpt out of the phaeton, and ran to the dear girl. Lord Orville opened the chaise-door, and I am sure I need not tell you what unfeigned joy accompanied our meeting.

We both begged we might not be parted during the ride, and Lord Orville was so good as to invite Captain Mirvan into his phaeton.

I think I was hardly ever more rejoiced than at this so seasonable visit from my dear Maria; who had no sooner heard the situation of my affairs, than with the assistance of Lady Howard and her kind mother, she besought her father with such earnestness to consent to the journey, that he had not been able to withstand their united entreaties; though she owned that, had he not expected to have met with Madame Duval, she believes he would not so readily have yielded. They arrived at Mrs. Beaumont's but a few minutes after we were out of sight, and overtook us without much difficulty.

I say nothing of our conversation, because you may so well suppose both the subjects we chose, and our manner of discussing them.

We all stopped at a great hotel, where we were obliged to enquire for a room; as Lady Louisa, *fatigued to death*, desired to

take

take ſomething before we began our rambles.

As ſoon as the party was aſſembled, the Captain, abruptly ſaluting me, ſaid, "So Miſs Belmont, I wiſh you joy; ſo I hear you've quarrelled with your new name already!"

"Me!—no, indeed, Sir."

"Then pleaſe for to tell me the reaſon you're in ſuch a hurry to change it."

"Miſs Belmont!" cried Mr. Lovel, looking around him with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, "I beg pardon,—but, if it is not impertinent,—I muſt beg leave to ſay, I always underſtood that Lady's name was Anville."

"Fore George," cried the Captain, "it runs in my head, I've ſeen you ſomewhere before! and now I think on't, pray a'n't you the perſon I ſaw at the play one night, and who did n't know, all the time, whether it was a tragedy or a comedy, or a concert of fidlers?"

"I believe, Sir," ſaid Mr. Lovel, ſtammering, "I had once,—I think—the pleaſure of ſeeing you laſt ſpring."

"Ay, and if I live an hundred ſprings," anſwered he, "I ſhall never forget it; by Jingo, it has ſerved me for a moſt excellent good joke ever ſince. Well, howſomever, I'm

I'm glad to ſee you ſtill in the land of the living," ſhaking him roughly by the hand; "pray, if a body may be ſo bold, how much a night may you give at preſent to keep the undertakers aloof?"

"Me, Sir!" ſaid Mr. Lovel, very much diſcompoſed; "I proteſt I never thought myſelf in ſuch imminent danger as to—really, Sir, I don't underſtand you."

"O, you don't!—why then I'll make free for to explain myſelf. Gentlemen and Ladies, I'll tell you what; do you know this here gentleman, ſimple as he ſits there, pays five ſhillings a night to let his friends know he's alive!"

"And very cheap too," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "if we conſider the value of the intelligence."

Lady Louiſa, being now refreſhed, we proceeded upon our expedition.

The charming city of Bath anſwered all my expectations. The Creſcent, the proſpect from it, and the elegant ſymmetry of the Circus, delighted me. The Parades, I own, rather diſappointed me; one of them is ſcarce preferable to ſome of the beſt-paved ſtreets in London; and the other, though it affords a beautiful proſpect, a charming view of Prior Park and of the Avon, yet wanted ſomething in *itſelf* of more ſtriking elegance than a mere broad

pavement,

pavement, to ſatisfy the ideas I had formed of it.

At the pump-room, I was amazed at the public exhibition of the ladies in the bath: it is true, their heads are covered with bonnets; but the very idea of being ſeen, in ſuch a ſituation, by whoever pleaſes to look, is indelicate.

"Pore George," ſaid the Captain, looking into the bath, "this would be a moſt excellent place for old Madame French to dance a fandango in! By Jingo, I would n't wiſh for better ſport than to ſwing her round this here pond!"

"She would be very much obliged to you," ſaid Lord Orville, "for ſo extraordinary a mark of your favour."

"Why, to let you know," anſwered the Captain, "the hit my fancy mightily; I never took ſo much to an old tabby before."

"Really, now," cried Mr. Lovel, looking alſo into the bath, "I muſt confeſs it is, to me, very incomprehenſible why the ladies chuſe that frightful unbecoming dreſs to bathe in! I have often pondered very ſeriouſly upon the ſubject, but could never hit upon the reaſon."

"Well, I declare," ſaid Lady Louiſa, "I ſhould like of all things to ſet ſomething new a going; I always hated bathing, becauſe

becauſe one can get no pretty dreſs for it; now do, there's a good creature, try to help me to ſomething."

"Who? me!—O dear Ma'am," ſaid he, ſimpering, "I can't pretend to aſſiſt a perſon of your Ladyſhip's taſte; beſides, I have not the leaſt head for faſhions.—I really don't think I ever invented above three in my life!—but I never had the leaſt turn for dreſs,—never any notion of fancy or elegance."

"O fie, Mr. Lovel! how can you talk ſo?—don't we all know that you lead the *ton* in the *beau monde*? I declare, I think you dreſs better than any body."

"O dear Ma'am, you confuſe me to the laſt degree! *I* dreſs well!—I proteſt I don't think I'm ever fit to be ſeen!—I'm often ſhocked to death to think what a figure I go. If your Ladyſhip will believe me, I was full half an hour this morning thinking what I ſhould put on!"

"Odds my life," cried the Captain, "I wiſh I'd been near you! I warrant I'd have quickened your motions a little! Half an hour thinking what you'd put on! and who the deuce do you think cares the ſnuff of a candle whether you've any thing on or not?"

"O pray, Captain," cried Mrs. Selwyn, "don't be angry with the gentleman for *thinking*,

thinking, whatever be the cauſe, for I aſſure you he makes no common practice of offending in that way."

"Really, Ma'am, you're prodigiouſly kind," ſaid Mr. Lovel, angrily.

"Pray, now," ſaid the Captain, "did you ever get a ducking in that there place yourſelf?"

"A ducking, Sir!" repeated Mr. Lovel; "I proteſt I think that's rather an odd term!—but if you mean a *bathing*, it is an honour I have had many times."

"And pray, if a body may be ſo bold, what do you do with that frizle-frize top of your own? Why I'll lay you what you will, there is fat and greaſe enough on your crown, to buoy you up, if you were to go in head downwards."

"And I don't know," cried Mrs. Selwyn, "but that might be the eaſieſt way, for I'm ſure it would be the lighteſt."

"For the matter of that there," ſaid the Captain, "you muſt make him a ſoldier, before you can tell which is lighteſt, head or heels. Howſomever, I'd lay ten pounds to a ſhilling, I could whiſk him ſo dexterouſly over into the pool, that he ſhould light plump upon his foretop, and turn round like a tetotum."

"Done!" cried Lord Merton; "I take your odds!"

"Will

"Will you?" returned he; "why then, 'fore George, I'd do it as soon as say Jack Robinson."

"He, he!" faintly laughed Mr. Lovel, as he moved abruptly from the window; "upon honour, this is pleasant enough; but I don't see what right any body has to lay wagers about one, without one's consent."

"There, Lovel, you are out," cried Mr. Coverley; "any man may lay what wager about you he will; your consent is nothing to the purpose: he may lay that your nose is a sky-blue, if he pleases."

"Ay," said Mrs. Selwyn, "or that your mind is more adorned than your person;—or any absurdity whatsoever."

"I protest," said Mr. Lovel, "I think it's a very disagreeable privilege, and I must beg that nobody may take such a liberty with *me*."

"Like enough you may," cried the Captain; "but what's that to the purpose? suppose I've a mind to lay that you've never a tooth in your head!—pray, how will you hinder me?"

"You'll allow me, at least, Sir, to take the liberty of asking how you'll *prove* it?"

"How?—why, by knocking them all down your throat."

"Knocking them all down my throat, Sir!" repeated Mr. Lovel, with a look of horror, "I proteſt I never heard any thing ſo ſhocking in my life; and I muſt beg leave to obſerve, that no wager, in my opinion, could juſtify ſuch a barbarous action."

Here Lord Orville interfered, and hurried us to our carriages.

We returned in the ſame order we came. Mrs. Beaumont invited all the party to dinner, and has been ſo obliging as to beg Miſs Mirvan may continue at her houſe during her ſtay. The Captain will lodge at the Wells.

The firſt half hour after our return, was devoted to hearing Mr. Lovel's apologies for dining in his riding-dreſs.

Mrs. Beaumont then, addreſſing herſelf to Miſs Mirvan and me, enquired how we liked Bath?

"O hang," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "the ladies do not call this ſeeing Bath."

"No?—what ſhould ail 'em?" cried the Captain; "do you ſuppoſe they put their eyes in their pockets?"

"No, Sir; but I fancy you will find no perſon, that is, no perſon of any condition, — call going about a few places in a morning *ſeeing Bath*."

"Mayhap,

"Mayhap, then," ſaid the literal Captain, "you think we ſhould ſee it better by going about at midnight?"

"No, Sir, no," ſaid Mr. Lovel, with a ſupercilious ſmile, "I perceive you don't underſtand me,—*we* ſhould never call it *ſeeing Bath*, without going at the right ſeaſon."

"Why, what a plague, then," demanded he, "can you only ſee at one ſeaſon of the year?"

Mr. Lovel again ſmiled, but ſeemed ſuperior to making any anſwer.

"The Bath amuſements," ſaid Lord Orville, "have a ſameneſs in them, which, after a ſhort time, renders them rather inſipid: but the greateſt objection that can be made to the place, is the encouragement it gives to gameſters."

"Why I hope, my Lord, you would not think of aboliſhing *gaming*," cried Lord Merton, "'tis the very *zeſt* of life! Devil take me if I could live without it!"

"I am ſorry for it," ſaid Lord Orville, gravely, and looking at Lady Louiſa.

"Your Lordſhip is no judge of this ſubject," continued the other;—"but if once we could get you to a gaming-table, you'd never be happy away from it."

"I hope, my Lord," cried Lady Louisa, "that nobody *here* ever occasions your quitting it."

"Your Ladyship," said Lord Merton, recollecting himself, "has power to make me quit any thing."

"Except *herself*," said Mr. Coverley. "Egad, my Lord, I think I've helped you out there."

"You men of wit, Jack," answered his Lordship, "are always ready;—for my part, I don't pretend to any talents that way."

"Really, my Lord?" asked the sarcastic Mrs. Selwyn; "well, that is wonderful, considering success would be so much in your power."

"Pray, Ma'am," said Mr. Lovel to Lady Louisa, "has your Ladyship heard the news?"

"News!—what news?"

"Why the report circulating at the Wells concerning a certain person?"

"O Lord, no; pray tell me what it is!"

"O no, Ma'am, I beg your La'ship will excuse me; 'tis a profound secret, and I would not have mentioned it, if I had not thought you knew it."

"Lord, now, how can you be so monstrous?—I declare, now, you're a provoking

voking creature! But come, I know you'll tell me;—won't you, now?"

"Your La'ſhip knows I am but too happy to obey you; but 'pon honour I can't ſpeak a word, if you won't all promiſe me the moſt inviolable ſecrecy."

"I wiſh you'd wait for that from me," ſaid the Captain, "and I'll give you my word you'd be dumb for one while. Secrecy, quoth a!—'Fore George, I wonder you a'n't aſhamed to mention ſuch a word, when you talk of telling it to a woman. Though for the matter of that, I'd as lieve blab it to the whole ſex at once, as to go for to tell it to ſuch a thing as you."

"Such a thing as me, Sir!" ſaid Mr. Lovel, letting fall his knife and fork, and looking very important; "I really have not the honour to underſtand your expreſſion."

"It's all one for that," ſaid the Captain; "you may have it explained whenever you like it."

"'Pon honour, Sir," returned Mr. Lovel, "I muſt take the liberty to tell you, that I ſhould be extremely offended, but that I ſuppoſe it to be ſome ſea-phraſe; and therefore I'll let it paſs without further notice."

Lord Orville, then, to change the diſ-

course, asked Miss Mirvan if she should spend the ensuing winter in London?

"No, to be sure," said the Captain, "what should she for, when she has all that is to be seen before."

"Is London, then," said Mr. Lovel, smiling at Lady Louisa, "only to be regarded as a *sight?*"

"Why pray, Mr. Wilcare, how did you please for to regard it yourself? Answer me to that."

"O Sir, my opinion, I fancy you would hardly find intelligible. I don't understand *fine phrases* enough to define it to your comprehension. Don't you, La'ship think the task would be rather difficult?"

"O Lard, yes," cried Lady Louisa, "I declare I'd as soon teach my parrot to talk Welch."

"Ha! ha! ha! admirable!—'Pon honour your La'ship's quite in luck to-day;—but that, indeed, your La'ship is every day. Though to be sure, it is but candid to acknowledge, that the gentlemen of the ocean have a set of ideas, as well as a dialect, so opposite to *ours*, that it is by no means surprising *they* should regard London as a mere *show*, that may be seen by being *looked at*. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ha! ha!" echoed Lady Louisa: "Well,

"Well, I declare you are the drolleſt creature!"

"He! he! upon honour I can't help laughing at the conceit of *loving London* in a few weeks!"

"And what a plague ſhould hinder you?" cried the Captain; "do you want to ſpend a day in every ſtreet?"

Here again Lady Louiſa and Mr. Lovel interchanged ſmiles.

"Why, I warrant you, if I had the ſhewling it, I'd haul you from St. James's to Wapping the very firſt morning."

The ſmiles were now, with added contempt, repeated; which the Captain obſerving, looked very fiercely at Mr. Lovel, and ſaid, "Hark'ee, my ſpark, none of your grinning!—'tis a lingo I don't underſtand; and if you give me any more of it, I ſhall go near to lend you a box o' the ear."

"I proteſt, Sir," ſaid Mr. Lovel, turning extremely pale, "I think it's taking a very particular liberty with a perſon, to talk to one in ſuch a ſtyle as this!"

"It's like you may," returned the Captain, "but give a good gulp and I'll warrant you'll ſwallow it." Then, calling for a glaſs of ale, with a very provoking and ſignificant nod, he drank to his eaſy digeſtion.

Mr. Lovel made no answer, but looked extremely fullen; and soon after, we left the gentlemen to themselves.

I had then two letters delivered to me; one from Lady Howard and Mrs. Mirvan, which contained the kindest congratulations; and the other from Madame Duval, —but not a word from *you*,—to my no small surprise and concern.

Madame Duval seems greatly rejoiced at my late intelligence: a violent cold, she says, prevents her coming to Bristol. The Branghtons, she tells me, are all well; Miss Polly is soon to be married to Mr. Brown, but Mr. Smith has changed his lodgings, "which," she adds, "has made the house extremely dull. However, that's not the worst news; *pardi*, I wish it was! but I've been used like nobody,—for Monsieur Du Bois has had the baseness to go back to France without me." In conclusion, she assures me, as you prognosticated she would, that I shall be sole heiress of all she is worth, when Lady Orville.

At tea time, we were joined by all the gentlemen but Captain Mirvan, who went to the hotel where he was to sleep, and made his daughter accompany him, to separate her *trumpery*, as he called it, from his cloaths.

As soon as they were gone, Mr. Lovel, who

who ſtill appeared extremely ſulky, ſaid, "I proteſt, I never ſaw ſuch a vulgar, abuſive fellow in my life, as that Captain: pon honour, I believe he came here for no purpoſe in the world but to pick a quarrel; however, for my part, I vow I won't humour him."

"I declare," cried Lady Louiſa, "he put me in a monſtrous fright,—I never heard any body talk ſo ſhocking in my life!"

"I think," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, with great ſolemnity, "he threatned to box your ears, Mr. Lovel,—did not he?"

"Really, Ma'am," ſaid Mr. Lovel, colouring, "if one was to mind every thing thoſe low kind of people ſay,—one ſhould never be at reſt for one impertinence or other,—ſo I think the beſt way is to be above taking any notice of them."

"What," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, with the ſame gravity, "and ſo receive the blow in ſilence!"

During this diſcourſe, I heard the Captain's chaiſe ſtop at the door, and ran down ſtairs to meet Maria. She was alone, and told me that her father, who, ſhe was ſure, had ſome ſcheme in agitation againſt Mr. Lovel, had ſent her on before him. We continued in the parlour till his return, and were joined by Lord Orville, who begged

me not to inſiſt on a patience ſo unnatural, as ſubmitting to be excluded our ſociety. And let me, my dear Sir, with a grateful heart, let me own, I never before paſſed half an hour in ſuch perfect felicity.

I believe we were all ſorry when the Captain returned; yet his inward ſatisfaction, from however different a cauſe, did not ſeem inferior to what ours had been. He chucked Maria under the chin, rubbed his hands, and was ſcarce able to contain the fulneſs of his glee. We all attended him to the drawing-room, where, having compoſed his countenance, without any previous attention to Mrs. Beaumont, he marched up to Mr. Lovel, and abruptly ſaid, "Pray have you e'er a brother in theſe here parts?"

"Me, Sir?—no, thank Heaven, I'm free from all incumbrances of that ſort."

"Well," cried the Captain, "I met a perſon juſt now, ſo like you, I could have ſworn he had been your twin-brother."

"It would have been a moſt ſingular pleaſure to me," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "if I alſo could have ſeen him; for, really, I have not the leaſt notion what ſort of a perſon I am, and I have a prodigious curioſity to know."

Juſt then, the Captain's ſervant opening the

the door, ſaid, "A little gentleman below deſires to ſee one Mr. Lovel."

"Beg him to walk up ſtairs," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont. "But pray what is the reaſon William is out of the way?"

The man ſhut the door without any anſwer.

"I can't imagine who it is," ſaid Mr. Lovel; "I recollect no little gentleman of my acquaintance now at Briſtol,—except, indeed, the Marquis of Charlton,—but I don't much fancy it can be him. Let me ſee, who elſe is there ſo very little?—"

A confuſed noiſe among the ſervants now drew all eyes towards the door; the impatient Captain haſtened to open it, and then, clapping his hands, call'd out, "Fore George, 'tis the ſame perſon I took for your relation!"

And then, to the utter aſtoniſhment of every body but himſelf, he hauled into the room a monkey! full dreſſed, and extravagantly *a-la-mode!*

The diſmay of the company was almoſt general. Poor Mr. Lovel ſeemed thunderſtruck with indignation and ſurpriſe; Lady Louiſa began a ſcream, which for ſome time was inceſſant; Miſs Mirvan and I jumped involuntarily upon the ſeats of our chairs; Mrs. Beaumont herſelf followed our example; Lord Orville placed himſelf before

me as a guard, and Mrs. Selwyn, Lord Merton, and Mr. Coverley, burst into a loud, immoderate, ungovernable fit of laughter, in which they were joined by the Captain, till, unable to support himself, he rolled on the floor.

—The first voice which made its way through this general noise, was that of Lady Louisa, which her fright and screaming rendered extremely shrill. "Take it away!" cried she, "take the monster away,—I shall faint, I shall faint if you don't!"

Mr. Lovel, irritated beyond endurance, angrily demanded of the Captain "what he meant?"

"Mean?" cried the Captain, as soon as he was able to speak, "why only to shew you in your proper colours." Then rising, and pointing to the monkey, "Why now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I'll be judged by you all.—Did you ever see any thing more like? Odds my life, if it was n't for this here tail, you would n't know one from t'other."

"Sir," cried Mr. Lovel, stamping, "I shall take a time to make you feel my wrath."

"Come, now," continued the regardless Captain, "just for the fun's sake, doff your coat and waistcoat, and swop with Monsieur *Grinagain* here, and I'll warrant you'll not know yourself which is which."

"Not

"Not know myself from a monkey! I assure you, Sir, I'm not to be used in this manner, and I won't bear it, or curse me if I will!"

"Why heyday," cried the Captain, "what, is Master in a passion?—well, don't be angry,—come, he sha'n't hurt you;—here, shake a paw with him,—why he'll do you no harm, man!—come, kiss and friends!"

"Who I!" cried Mr. Lovel, almost mad with vexation, "as I'm a living creature, I would not touch him for a thousand worlds!"

"Send him a challenge," cried Mr. Coverley, "and I'll be your second."

"Ay, do," said the Captain, "and I'll be second to my friend Monsieur Clapperclaw here. Come, to it at once!—tooth and nail."

"God forbid!" cried Mr. Lovel, retreating, "I would sooner trust my person with a mad bull!"

"I don't like the looks of him myself," said Lord Morton, "for he grins most horribly."

"Oh! I'm frightened out of my senses!" cried Lady Louisa, "take him away, or I shall die!"

"Captain," said Lord Orville, "the ladies

ladies are alarmed, and I muſt beg you would ſend the monkey away."

"Why, where can be the mighty harm of one monkey more than another?" anſwered the Captain; "howſomever, if it's agreeable to the ladies, ſuppoſe we turn them out together?"

"What do you mean by that, Sir?" cried Mr. Lovel, lifting up his cane.

"What do *you* mean?" cried the Captain, fiercely: "be ſo good as to down with your cane."

Poor Mr. Lovel, too much intimidated to ſtand his ground, yet too much enraged to ſubmit, turned haſtily round, and, forgetful of conſequences, vented his paſſion by giving a furious blow to the monkey.

The creature darting forwards, ſprung inſtantly upon him, and clinging round his neck, faſtened his teeth to one of his ears.

I was really ſorry for the poor man, who, though an egregious fop, had committed no offence that merited ſuch chaſtiſement.

It was impoſſible, now, to diſtinguiſh whoſe ſcreams were loudeſt, thoſe of Mr. Lovel, or of the terrified Lady Louiſa, who, I believe, thought her own turn was approaching: but the unrelenting Captain roared with joy.

Not ſo Lord Orville: ever humane, generous, and benevolent, he quitted his charge, who he ſaw was wholly out of danger,

and

and ſeizing the monkey by the collar, made him looſen the cat, and then, with a ſudden ſwing, flung him out of the room, and ſhut the door.

Poor Mr. Lovel, almoſt fainting with terror, ſunk upon the floor, crying out, "Oh I ſhall die, I ſhall die!—Oh I'm bit to death!"

"Captain Mirvan," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont, with no little indignation, "I muſt own, I don't perceive the wit of this action, and I am ſorry to have ſuch cruelty practiſed in my houſe."

"Why, Lord, Ma'am," ſaid the Captain, when his rapture abated ſufficiently for ſpeech, "how could I tell they'd fall out ſo?—by Jingo, I brought him to be a meſſmate for t'other."

"Egad," ſaid Mr. Coverley, "I would not have been ſerved ſo for a thouſand pounds!"

"Why then there's the odds of it," ſaid the Captain, "for you ſee he is ſerved ſo for nothing. But come" (turning to Mr. Lovel) "be of good heart, all may end well yet, and you and *Monſeer* Longtail be as good friends as ever."

"I'm ſurpriſed, Mrs. Beaumont," cried Mr. Lovel, ſtarting up, "that you can ſuffer a perſon under your roof to be treated ſo inhumanly."

"What

"What argufies so many words?" said the unfeeling Captain, "it is but a slit of the ear; it only looks as if you had been in the pillory."

"Very true," added Mrs. Selwyn, "and who knows but it may acquire you the credit of being an anti-miniſterial writer?"

"I proteſt," cried Mr. Lovel, looking ruefully at his dreſs, "my new riding-ſuit's all over blood!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" cried the Captain; "ſee what comes of ſtudying for an hour what you ſhall put on."

Mr. Lovel then walked to the glaſs, and looking at the place, exclaimed, "Oh Heaven, what a monſtrous wound! my ear will never be fit to be ſeen again!"

"Why then," ſaid the Captain, "you muſt hide it;—'tis but wearing a wig."

"A wig!" repeated the affrighted Mr. Lovel, "*I* wear a wig?—no, not if you would give me a thouſand pounds an hour!"

"I declare," ſaid Lady Louiſa, "I never heard ſuch a ſhocking propoſal in my life!"

Lord Orville then, ſeeing no proſpect that the altercation would ceaſe, propoſed to the Captain to walk. He aſſented; and having

having given Mr. Lovel a nod of exultation, accompanied his Lordship down ſtairs.

"Pon honour," ſaid Mr. Lovel, the moment the door was ſhut, "that fellow is the greateſt brute in nature! he ought not to be admitted into a civilized ſociety."

"Lovel," ſaid Mr. Coverley, affecting to whiſper, "you muſt certainly pink him: you muſt not put up with ſuch an affront."

"Sir," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "with any common perſon, I ſhould not deliberate an inſtant; but, really, with a fellow who has done nothing but fight all his life, 'pon honour, Sir, I can't think of it!"

"Lovel," ſaid Lord Merton, in the ſame voice, "you *muſt* call him to account."

"Every man," ſaid he, pettiſhly, "is the beſt judge of his own affairs, and I don't aſk the honour of any perſon's advice."

"Egad, Lovel," ſaid Mr. Coverley, "you're in for it!—you can't poſſibly be off!"

"Sir," cried he, very impatiently, "upon any proper occaſion, I ſhould be as ready to ſhew my courage as any body;—but as to fighting for ſuch a trifle as this,—I proteſt I ſhould bluſh to think of it!"

"A trifle!" cried Mrs. Selwyn; "good Heaven!

Heaven! and have you made this aſtoniſhing riot about a bite?"

"Ma'am," anſwered the poor wretch, in great confuſion, "I did not know at firſt how that my cheek might have been bit:—but as 'tis no worſe, why it does not a great deal ſignify. Mrs. Beaumont, I have the honour to wiſh you good evening; I'm ſure my darlings muſt be waiting." And then, very abruptly, he left the room.

What a commotion has this miſchief-loving Captain raiſed! Were I to remain here long, even the ſociety of my dear Maria would ſcarce compenſate for the diſturbances which he excites.

When he returned, and heard of the quiet exit of Mr. Lovel, his triumph was intolerable. "I think, I think," cried he, "I have peppered him well! I'll warrant he won't give an hour to-morrow morning to ſettling what he ſhall put on; why his coat," coming to me, "would be a moſt excellent match for old Madame Furbelow's beſt Lyons ſilk! 'Fore George, I'd deſire no better ſport, than to have that there old cat here, to go her ſnacks!"

All the company then, Lord Orville, Miſs Mirvan, and myſelf excepted, played at cards, and—oh how much better did we paſs our time!

While we were engaged in a moſt delightful

ful converſation, a ſervant brought me a letter, which he told me had, by ſome accident, been miſlaid. Judge of my feelings, when I ſaw, my deareſt Sir, your revered hand-writing! My emotions ſoon betrayed to Lord Orville whom the letter was from; the importance of the contents he well knew, and, aſſuring me I ſhould not be ſeen by the card-players, he beſought me to open it without delay.

Open it, indeed I did,—but read it I could not;—the willing, yet awful conſent you have granted,—the tenderneſs of your expreſſions,—the certainty that no obſtacle remained to my eternal union with the loved owner of my heart, gave me ſenſations too various, and though joyful, too little placid for obſervation. Finding myſelf unable to proceed, and blinded by the tears of gratitude and delight, which ſtarted into my eyes, I gave over the attempt of reading, till I retired to my own room: and, having no voice to anſwer the enquiries of Lord Orville, I put the letter into his hands, and left it to ſpeak both for me and itſelf.

Lord Orville was himſelf affected by your kindneſs; he kiſſed the letter as he returned it, and, preſſing my hand affectionately to his heart, "You are now," (ſaid he, in a low voice) "all my own! Oh my Evelina, how will my ſoul find room for its happineſs?

neſs?—it ſeems already burſting!" I could make no reply; indeed I hardly ſpoke another word the reſt of the evening; ſo little talkative is the fulneſs of content-ment.

O my deareſt Sir, the thankfulneſs of my heart I muſt pour forth at our meeting, when, at your feet, my happineſs receives its confirmation from your bleſſing, and when my noble-minded, my beloved Lord Orville, preſents to you the highly-honour-ed and thrice-happy Evelina.

A few lines I will endeavour to write on Thurſday, which ſhall be ſent off expreſs, to give you, ſhould nothing intervene, yet more certain aſſurance of our meeting.

Now then, therefore, for the firſt—and probably the laſt time I ſhall ever own the name, permit me to ſign myſelf,

Moſt dear Sir,

Your gratefully affectionate,

EVELINA BELMONT.

Lady Louiſa, at her own particular de-ſire, will be preſent at the ceremony, as well as Mrs. Mirvan and Mrs. Selwyn: Mr. Macartney will, the ſame morning, be united to my foſter-ſiſter, and my father himſelf will give us both away.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

EVERY wish of my soul is now fulfilled—for the felicity of my Evelina is equal to her worthiness!

Yes, my child, thy happiness is engraved, in golden characters, upon the tablets of my heart! and their impression is indelible; for, should the rude and deep-searching hand of Misfortune attempt to pluck them from their repository, the fleeting fabric of life would give way, and in tearing from my vitals the nourishment by which they are supported, she would but grasp at a shadow insensible to her touch.

Give thee my consent?—Oh thou joy, comfort, and pride of my life, how cold is that word to express the fervency of my approbation! yes, I do indeed give thee my consent, and so thankfully, that, with the humblest gratitude to Providence, I would seal it with the remnant of my days.

Hasten, then, my love, to bless me with thy presence, and to receive the blessings with which my fond heart overflows!—And, oh my Evelina, hear and assist in one only, humble, but ardent prayer which yet animates my devotions: that the height of

bliss

neſs?—it ſeems already burſting!" I could make no reply; indeed I hardly ſpoke another word the reſt of the evening; ſo little talkative is the fulneſs of contentment.

O my deareſt Sir, the thankfulneſs of my heart I muſt pour forth at our meeting, when, at your feet, my happineſs receives its confirmation from your bleſſing, and when my noble-minded, my beloved Lord Orville, preſents to you the highly-honoured and thrice-happy Evelina.

A few lines I will endeavour to write on Thurſday, which ſhall be ſent off expreſs, to give you, ſhould nothing intervene, yet more certain aſſurance of our meeting.

Now then, therefore, for the firſt—and probably the laſt time I ſhall ever own the name, permit me to ſign myſelf,

Moſt dear Sir,
Your gratefully affectionate,
EVELINA BELMONT.

Lady Louiſa, at her own particular deſire, will be preſent at the ceremony, as well as Miſs Mirvan and Mrs. Selwyn: Mr. Macartney will, the ſame morning, be united to my foſter-ſiſter, and my father himſelf will give us both away.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

EVERY wish of my ſoul is now fulfilled—for the felicity of my Evelina is equal to her worthineſs!

Yes, my child, thy happineſs is engraved, in golden characters, upon the tablets of my heart! and their impreſſion is indelible; for, ſhould the rude and deep-ſearching hand of Misfortune attempt to pluck them from their repoſitory, the fleeting fabric of life would give way, and in tearing from my vitals the nourihment by which they are ſupported, ſhe would but graſp at a ſhadow inſenſible to her touch.

Give thee my conſent?—Oh thou joy, comfort, and pride of my life, how cold is that word to expreſs the fervency of my approbation! yes, I do indeed give thee my conſent, and ſo thankfully, that, with the humbleſt gratitude to Providence, I would ſeal it with the remnant of my days.

Haſten, then, my love, to bleſs me with thy preſence, and to receive the bleſſings with which my fond heart overflows!—And, oh my Evelina, hear and aſſiſt in one only, humble, but ardent prayer which yet animates my devotions: that the height of

bliſs

bliſs to which thou art riſing may not render thee giddy, but that the purity of thy mind may form the brighteſt ſplendor of thy proſperity!—and that the weak and aged frame of thy almoſt idolizing parent, nearly worn out by time, paſt afflictions, and infirmities, may yet be able to ſuſtain a meeting with all its better part holds dear; and then, that all the wounds which the former ſeverity of fortune inflicted, may be healed and purified by the ultimate conſolation of pouring forth my dying words in bleſſings on my child!—cloſing theſe joy-ſtreaming eyes in her preſence, and breathing my laſt faint ſighs in her loved arms!

Grieve not, oh child of my care, grieve not at the inevitable moment; but may thy own end be equally propitious! Oh may'ſt thou, when full of days, and full of honour, ſink down as gently to reſt,—be loved as kindly, watched as tenderly as thy happy father! And may'ſt thou, when thy glaſs is run, be ſweetly, but not bitterly mourned, by ſome remaining darling of thy affections, —ſome yet ſurviving Evelina!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

ALL is over, my dearest Sir, and the fate of your Evelina is decided! This morning, with fearful joy, and trembling gratitude, she united herself for ever with the object of her dearest, her eternal affection.

I have time for no more; the chaise now waits which is to conduct me to dear Berry Hill, and to the arms of the best of men.

EVELINA.

FINIS.

This Day is published,

(Ornamented with an elegant Frontiſpiece)

Price 3s. ſewed, or 3s. 6d. bound,

THEATRICAL BOUQUET;

Containing an

ALPHABETICAL ARRANGEMENT

OF THE

PROLOGUES and EPILOGUES

Which have been publiſhed by

DISTINGUISHED WITS,

From the Time that COLLEY CIBBER firſt came on the Stage, to the preſent Year.

Extremis cum primis,
Lilia Amaryllis.

In One large Volume, 12mo. Price 3s ſewed, or 3s. 6d. bound,

A new Edition of

A TOUR THROUGH IRELAND;

Wherein the Preſent State of that Kingdom is conſidered; and the moſt noted Cities, Towns, Seats, Buildings, Loughs, &c. deſcribed,

Interſperſed with Obſervations on the Manners, Cuſtoms, Antiquities, Curioſities, and Natural Hiſtory of that Country.

To which is prefixed,

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE KINGDOM;

With the Diſtances between the Ports, &c. on the Coaſts of Great Britain, and thoſe on that of Ireland.

By PHILIP LUCKOMBE.

In Two Volumes, Price 6s. bound, a new Edition of

EMMA;

OR,

THE CHILD OF SORROW.

A NOVEL.

By a LADY.

Embelliſhed by an engraved Frontiſpiece and Title,

Price 2s. 6d. bound in Red,

The LONDON SONGSTER;

OR,

POLITE MUSICAL COMPANION.

Containing 544 of the neweſt and moſt favourite Songs, Catches, Duets and Cantatas.

To which is added,

A genteel Collection of Toaſts, Sentiments, and Hob-nobs now in Faſhion.